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The DOWNFALL *of* TEMLAHAM

The DOWNFALL *of* TEMLAHAM

By

MARIUS BARBEAU

Author of "Indian Days in the Canadian Rockies", etc.

Illustrations by

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and ANNIE D. SAVAGE



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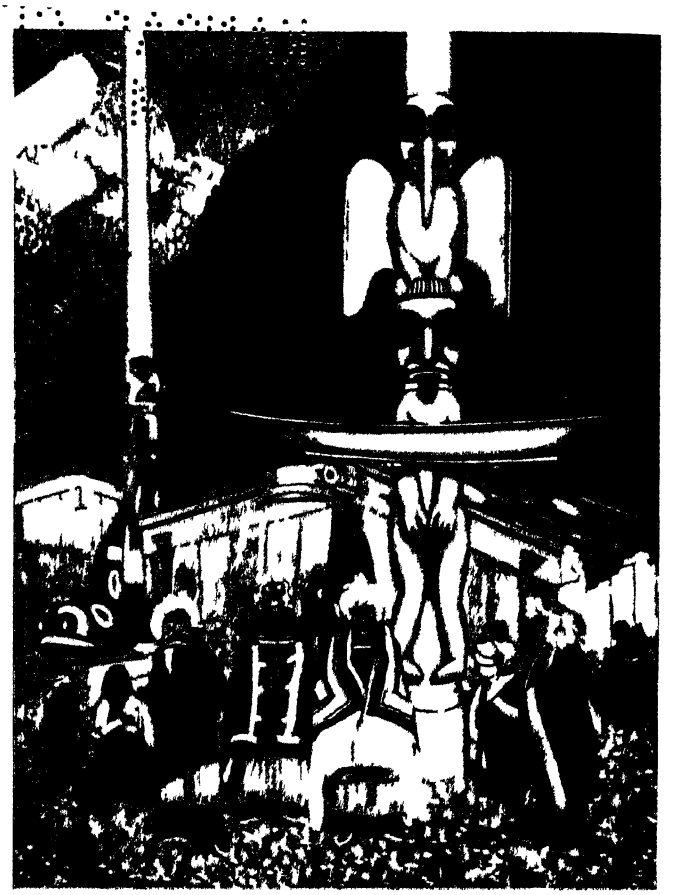
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A FEAST AMONG THE SKEENA RIVER PEOPLE

By W Langdon Kihn

INTRODUCTION



HEN the American Indians first encountered the White Man, their surprise was complete, overwhelming They acclaimed him as a godly spirit from the blue sky; or else, mistaking him for a demon out of the dark caves in the Levant, they endeavoured to check his progress.

A quarrel over the meaning of his advent soon sundered them into factions, a quarrel that embittered the lives of multitudes through generations. Was he the forerunner of a new Golden Age, or a mere self-seeker whose taints and contaminations would spell ruin and death in the long run? Time alone could tell. Even the seers disagreed among themselves, and their forecasts baffled their followers. Ancestral wisdom had run to the end of its tether. The fools, everywhere countless among mankind, plunged headlong into an era of momentous changes. They survived not, most of them, to mourn the downfall of their nations.

Kamalmuk and Sunbeams—the characters of our truthful story—like so many others, misinterpreted the trend of their destiny. They did not understand the curse that had crept insidiously into their lives. Nor could any one else have conjured wiser counsels in their stead.

Husband and wife though they were, and highborn in their tribes, they soon grievously fell out, never to reunite. Their conflict was not their own at bottom, but the inexorable travail of fate in distracted souls, the souls of a

conquered race. In the White Man, Kamalmuk saluted a redeemer, while Sunbeams vowed her obedience to naught else but the teachings of her pagan forefathers. Blindly they went on their way, forever apart, amid pitfalls; he, bold and venturesome, from a race of ancient Siberian nomads migrating southwards under the banner of the Wolf; she, a native of the American soil, proud and vindictive, whose inherited symbols were the Fireweeds, the Sun and the Rainbow. As soon as he beheld the white supermen, he decided to become one of them, to acquire their might and share their treasures. More wary, she spurned such temptations, satisfied as she was with the ancient heirlooms of her kin. The ties that bound them together could not withstand the impact of conflicting ambitions and bitter trials. Too frail, they snapped when Fate knocked at the door and propounded a new riddle. And Fate, perforce, solved the riddle for them in the end.

Even before the White Man caused the downfall of the native village-dwellers, they had known strife in the heart of their homeland. Wars, since the dawn of ages, had devastated their settlements; misfortunes had scorched their souls.

For a millenium, their ancestors long ago thrived in pristine innocence and peace. The tribes of man lived side by side in Arcadian friendliness. The villages of Keemelay and Kunradal prospered on the heights of Temlaham, a native Garden of Eden on the banks of the Skeena. Their blissful existence lasted only till the day when illicit love marred their felicity, aroused the wrath of the river spirits and invited untold disasters. A forgetful posterity, after a miraculous redemption, relapsed into evil ways and brought about the downfall of Temlaham. The Golden Age came to an end and the people dispersed throughout the country for a livelihood. Temlaham to this day has remained an

awe-inspiring place and a forlorn symbol of happiness lost through sin and folly.

But the real downfall happened only when the White Man overran the native races on this continent and conquered their domains to the last mountain preserve. It is a tale of the past centuries, east of the Great Lakes, but, in the far-off Canadian Rockies, only of the passing generation. Kamalmuk and Sunbeams fought the battle of their race against the invader of the Skeena only two score years ago. One of them, Sunbeams, still survives, an old woman, a strange, vivid personality, now lost in a world that has rejected her, a world that she will never understand.

The story of Kamalmuk is true to life. It came to us orally from his friends, his relatives, old people all, whose memory still fondly delves in the past. Its pageantry and inherent poetry flow naturally from their authentic source—an ample stock of songs and traditions familiar to this day among the Gitksan of the upper Skeena River, in British Columbia. Yet, the narrative itself is couched in the author's own style and composition.

The myths of Temlaham, given as a corollary as it were, are traditional recollections in set form. They stand here for the ceremonial account given by Sunbeams, at the Kitwinkul feast in 1887, of the origin of her family emblems and privileges. Their records in our keeping are freely interpreted and paraphrased.

A rich vein for poetic inspiration lies within native themes and surroundings. The writer, the painter and the musician may discover treasures in this virgin field of human endeavour, so far untrodden. In the conflict between aboriginal races and the white conqueror, thinkers and moralists will find wide vistas on every side. The door is wide open for all to enter, who would rather venture into new avenues than blindly follow the herd in the

beaten trails. The author and his collaborators—Jackson, Holgate, Kihn, Miss Carr and Miss Savage, a few of whose pictures are here reproduced—may not have advanced far beyond the threshold; but they have enjoyed in their efforts the breath of novelty, independence and a newborn faith, that may some day spread to many of their betters, still to come.

To the National Museum of Canada we acknowledge our debt for our knowledge of the aboriginal sources, which we have ourselves studied at first hand, in the course of several seasons among the natives of the Skeena.

We also extend our grateful thanks to Miss Mabel Williams and Mr. Diamond Jenness, both of Ottawa, for reading, respectively, the narratives of Kamalmuk and of The Retaliation of Keemelay, and offering useful suggestions.

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KAMALMUK

FIRST PART

Malee's Summons



TWO messengers proceeded together from house to house in the morning, slowly as becomes the nephews of a proud chief on a ceremonial errand, their heads crowned with eagle's down, white like the snow and light as the air. They conveyed abroad a summons to the noted neighbours and visitors assembled for the winter festivals in the village of Kitwinkul. Glad tidings to friends and kinsmen they proclaimed, glad tidings from Malee, the noble host whose lodge stands under the emblem of the Wolf, glad tidings to all ! A feast for the elevation of new chiefs, long forecasted, yet once before postponed to his regret, will take place under his auspices this very day—hark ye !—at the hour of *yuhs*, as the sun leans westwards in its trail. Glad tidings in truth, for Malee's name ranks high among those of tribal dignitaries, and his liberality is seldom surpassed anywhere in display and lavishness !

When the messengers approached Yahl's door, they tapped the hard frozen ground with the butt of their carved batons, chanting their newly composed invitation:

" *Hay-ha-i !* We sing the song of Blue-jay for Yahl and Sunbeams, two high chiefs sitting behind the fire within, as brothers of one blood;

" We sing for Chief Yahl, we sing our *leemih* of greeting, we beat the turf with our staffs for him, who owns the Fireweed dwelling in our midst;

" We sing for Sunbeams, we beat the turf for her, who responded to our uncle's call and brought her son along from the friendly town of Segyukla, Sunbeams in person, whose emblems are the very Stars of heaven;

" We lay down at your doorstep Malee's summons that you, chiefs Yahl of Kitwinkul and Sunbeams of Segyukla, may behold his accumulated treasures ere the sun sets, that you may regale yourself on red berries like Blue-jay, and relish his delicacies in trays deep and overflowing. *Hay-ha-i*!"

The chant no sooner had ceased on the lips of the delegates than a retort, hasty and curt, rang out from the inner precincts of the lodge: "Go back, O you staff-bearers, go back and tell the Wolf chief that Sunbeams shall never falter! Her mind is straight and her allegiance to her ancestors unquestioned. She remains true to herself and true to the ancient ways of her forebears, the only sensible ways!" While the messengers, perplexed, gazed at each other in suspense, she resumed her unwonted outburst, as though airing a feeling too long pent up in privacy: " Tell him, your august leader, that sooner would I rebel than yield to perverse advice and ignore his summons; that sooner would I die in my prime than renounce the heritage which is uppermost in my ambition, than abdicate my son's own birthright to the seat of honour in our household, the birthright of my son, of my grandson and a posterity yet unborn."

The messengers paused a while before venturing a single word of answer. They knew Sunbeams' fiery determination to claim for her adolescent son, Bitten-wrists, the hereditary title of Hanamuk, foremost in her lineage, and

resist to the last her uncle Neetuh's counter pretensions in his own favour. There were rumours of a feud rampant within the fold of this ancient kin; as also of a variance between Sunbeams and her husband Kamalmuk. And a clash threatened in the presence of the neighbourly villagers of Kitwanga, Segyukla and Kitwinkul, a clash that would mar social amenities in functions still dear to most, young and old. They tapped the ground and their faces once more beamed with smiles. "We mind your words, great chief, truly we mind them," they confided, taking their leave, " and so will your host, Malee. Your loyalty will greatly cheer him, who more than any other deprecates default in the ranks of the *ya-auk*. His only wish is to pass on his title to his heir, as your chieftain Hanamuk is doing. He is stooping, like him, under the burden of his many winters; his time is passed. And there is a need, so he insists, for stalwart leaders in these troubled times, of leaders who know the right path, whose mind is clear like the water that springs from the mountain-sides." Departing, they blew a handful of bird's down backwards, and uttered a wish, " Peace withal in the Fireweed dwelling! The soft down floats with its blessings in the wind. May your counsels be bred in the wisdom of old, lest your household be forever rent asunder for its downfall. Such is Malee's word, the word of goodspeed to his neighbours and visitors now reunited in one fold ! "

Kamalmuk heard with impatience his uncle's pointed admonition in the mouth of the delegates, as also did his wife, Sunbeams; they both chanced to meet at the moment in Yahl's premises for a renewed endeavour to compose their differences. And the warning jarred with their half-hearted efforts. He smiled ironically at the pious wish of

an old man: "May your counsels be bred in the wisdom of your forebears! . . ." nay, he laughed it away outright, he whose aberrant notions caused his elders sorrowful concern, while his wife fretted at the preposterous idea of a household forever sundered for its downfall. Of what use ancient wisdom to Kamalmuk, an open-minded man, strong and optimistic, high-born in his tribe, who implicitly accepted as a momentous revelation the new ways from the east, those of the White Man now penetrating the country on all sides? Of what earthly use would renouncement be to Sunbeams, the yearnings of whose soul surged from the very fount of the past, who would rather fight and go down than forfeit an inherited privilege, even to a kinsman, or step down from the pinnacle of her inborn ambitions.

To him custom was the idiom of an age already out of date, now on the wane everywhere; its discredit would soon be complete, final. No use holding on to the shreds of a tattered garment of feather and pelt from the backwoods, to outworn regalia out of the secret cedar chest of a chieftain, to senile teachings and rules that could no longer impose their distortions upon youth and virility! He longed to be the pioneer in novelty and invention, not a spiteful champion of a damaged cause. And thrills there were at every turn in the untold adventure of a generation. The triumph of the white people, the Ramkseewahs, over native primitiveness and reluctance spurred him to novel emulation. It would sweep him ere long into the high station among his compatriots which otherwise belonged to his lot from an unbroken chain of distinguished ancestors —the clan whose badge had been the Wolf since the beginning of time.

What could he do but smile feelingly in his disbelief, when confronted with decrepit advisors who preached tradition to him, as this very day? What could he do but

smile and chafe, when harassed by an ambitious wife, conventional and unyielding to her moccasin tips, who firmly believed in the sky origin of her ancestry at Temlaham, who dreamt only of heirlooms, salmon streams and hunting grounds, who aspired to the leadership of her family for her puny son in the face of a dangerous and elderly rival?

The truth is that his flexible mind by no means was free from doubt, a doubt which oft left him wavering. He loathed the problems, for the torment they entailed, which constantly besieged his thoughts and undermined his resolution, if not his character. Wonders had trooped into the country in the trail of the Ramkseewahs, and marvels and wealth beyond reckoning. Yet not all of them were a real blessing. For a few years in the company of white men himself, mostly miners and adventurers then overrunning the north-west, he had seized upon an opportunity denied most others, of learning a new world of truths, good or bad, of spying strange avenues of life, and of playing with temptations which no barbarian has ever known how to resist in his burning soul. He would in spite of himself sometimes fall back in his tracks, as it were, half conscious of a great evil creeping upon him for his undoing, and then, like a man of consequence, curb the impulses which for so long had dwelt in the blood of his race. Whenever his longing for the mirage that hovered beyond his grasp came to a halt, he felt most unhappy and forlorn, like a wanderer cast away on a foreign shore. And he vainly sought for a sign-post at the horizon, the sign-post which inevitably fails one like him in the maddening search for an untrod destiny.

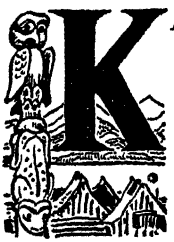
Sunbeams on her side never faced such perplexities. Graceful and agile was her body and penetrating her black eye; her unspoilt mind was straight as a hemlock tree, a mind which had not once harboured hesitation. And she

despised her husband's bias for the white man with an instinctive fear. To her the stranger seemed beneath contempt, a rascal with a forked tongue, whose only law is greed and depredation. The dominating light of her spirit, and therefore her guidance, issued from the primordial wisdom taught her in her childhood by the elders. There had been at the dawn of ages an ancestress whom Sunbeams of heaven once protected against merciless enemies, and this was her own 'grandmother'. From the divine progenitor of her family, from Sunbeams herself, had descended precious gifts and heirlooms, down to her own personal name, ever since jealously guarded within the fold. And a crime it would be to renounce them or not to transmit them in the wonted style, even to the least particle. Rules of the sky had come down in precepts which one must obey, else court ruin, if not immediate at least within a measurable span. One and all among the tribes of the Ksan are duty bound to hold on to the strands of heredity, to pass on to the coming generation the patrimony which has received the consecration of time, be it the prized possessions or the *ada-orh*, the traditional lore, of each family, be it merely the social discipline that keeps everyone in the right path and insures contentment in life. Let him who is honest thrive, let him enjoy the benefit of his industry in the open! Let the frontiers of his hunting grounds be respected, let him show the sacred emblems of his lineage to his guests, the more numerous the more enviable, in the winter festivals; allow him a wholesome emulation to excel the others and advance until he reaches the front rank. But this is only the outward face of wisdom, behind which stands the inner lining, not less palpable, not less essential. Let him who swerves aside, cuts loose from his bondage, who indulges in the black art

of witchcraft, be castigated as he deserves, for he shall receive his due from a hidden hand raised for his retribution.

The practical outcome of it all in Sunbeams' estimation appeared as bright as daylight. To live her own life she had to be self-reliant, bold and unswerving. Her part was to play a lone hand. While Kamalmuk rambled along devious pathways, neglected his birthright and failed to sustain his nephews or his sons in the tribal functions, her uncle Neetuh was guilty of a breach still more damnable, if thoroughly unlike her husband's. His personal influence rested mainly on fear and extortion. His repute as a mighty and vindictive sorcerer had spread afar, and it was rumoured that his secret amulets in a small wooden casket lay hidden in a graveyard, where he resorted at night for untold meanness and evil. Both men in her merciless judgment stood as culprits. For one there was a fair chance that he might some day return to sanity. But for the other, Neetuh, not a speck of hope. For his odious craft worked iniquity and death, and bred hatred beyond redemption. Was he not her rival, besides, the only one that stood between her and her coveted prize? This she would never forgive. She must confront him in the feast lodge to-day, defeat him single-handed and seize in his very face the seat of honour for her offspring. She must act swiftly, with daring, fearless of consequences. In this struggle was encompassed her life's goal, as verily as runs the backbone from the head of a fish to its fan-like tail.

Divided Counsels



"KAMALMUK, you the nephew of Weehah, Great-wind-of-the-air, the highest chief of Kitwinkul," entreated Sunbeams with a voice warm with prayer and reproof, after the delegates had departed; "Kamalmuk, will you not listen to me, and yield at last to reason plain and simple as the light of day?" Her husband gazed at her in annoyance. She went on: "Ere the sun goes out at the western gate, the standing of your son Bitten-wrists shall be settled before the assembled tribes. No one can prevent it, unless you can yourself bar the *ya-auk* or induce Neetuh to renounce his claim. A chief Bitten-wrists shall be, young as he is, holding his head high with pride, a credit to his parents and an asset for the future, or else a mere underling, carrying out obediently Neetuh's orders and begging for favours; this, for years, perhaps a lifetime. The choice is really yours, and to-day is the date. Our son, though entitled in every conceivable way to the glorious name of our head-chief, Hanamuk, may for our lack of pluck inherit only the obscure career of a hunter or a fisherman, of, who knows!—of a berry-picker among women or a root-digger in the river valleys. What a shame! And he is bright and cunning for his age, worthy of a better fate. Deprived by our common fault of the only name that indeed counts in our family councils, he shall only now and then show his uncrowned head in the winter feasts, now with the petty name of Bitten-wrists, then with that of Frong-on-ice, or, if he succeeds by himself, eventually that of Gyadem-gilhaolee,

Man-of-the-woods whose body is smaller than his head. The highest title then attainable for him would be Kahaytuh, Call-of-the-Wolf, and a woman's name at that—a worthy achievement for the favourite son of Kamalmuk and Sunbeams, both of the noblest extraction in their respective towns!"

"Woman," interrupted Kamalmuk, "be still! I am annoyed at your incessant prattle. Your words run like water on the rolling pebbles of a creek, always the same. They never vary a tittle. Your aim is blind, as that of a humpback salmon heading on for the headwaters, there to spawn at dawn and burst at night. You would not glance aside, would not listen to advice. Your object is the chieftainship for your son, naught else. And the boy is so puny that he does not yet reach up to my elbow. Poor little chap! What would he care for a seat among the mighty, of what help would he be to his peers? O shades of all past Hanamuks! Like me he will snap his fingers at the *ya-auk*, when he is grown up to speak his own mind. The foolery is doomed. It has vanished elsewhere; it is fast drifting to the refuse heap in our valleys. It has served our forefathers in its day, very well, I know it! But, are your eyes not open to the shining light? Don't you perceive that the world is moving apace in our times?"

"You are plucking off your own feathers, you poor silly bird!" angrily retorted Sunbeams. "No sooner is the *ya-auk* set aside than our people will have forfeited their very rights. Hence, peril! In default of public gatherings in the house of festivals to sanction exchanges and promote advancement, what happens? Our customs come to the ground with a crash. No longer do we inherit our crests, our uncle's property, and their hunting grounds. We remain nameless. No longer are there any true marriages or burials. No more debts paid, all investments

lost! Lies, dishonesty, crass poverty in the place of it all! And bedlam in the fallen land of Temlaham. Dare you tell me with a straight face that our people can thrive without common sense, without safeguard, without any more leadership and control than is known to groundhogs in their holes or to rabbits in their tunnels under the turf? Nephew of the august chief Weehah of Kitwinkul, I declare that your deplorable lapses are as painful to me, your wife, as they are to your dearest kinsmen at home. And your nephews no less than your sons, a score of them, are sure some day to damn you for the disrepute into which they must inevitably fall, if their fate at all rests in your hands."

Sunbeams' every sentence sounded like a proverb long familiar to Kamalmuk. Her charge could not be dismissed lightly. In an honest argument, she would corner him in a blind alley, and there riddle him with cruel irony. "Oh! can you not grasp the trend of events . . . ," Kamalmuk enquired distractedly, "the events of which we have heard from the sea-coast for two score of years? And then, what do you think of the change here since the talking-wire (the telegraph line) has pulled its long hair through our country?"

"The trend of events, the changes . . . ?" sneered Sunbeams over her shoulder, the back of her hand propped on her bulging hip. He continued, "Yes, you know yourself Our west coast relatives, the Tsimsyan, have turned their back years ago on the ancient lore. They now live comfortably like the white people; they sail down to Victoria in their boats when they wish to. They go to church on Sundays, even to Legyarh, their famous chief. No pagans among them, all Christians, all white people or the like! They have money to boot, what care they for soiled blankets or ground-hog robes? Tell me, would you

not have your sons be Tsimsyans rather than backwoodsmen ? "

She stopped him short. " Enough of this ! I cannot follow. You travelled the earth more than one; you know our kinsmen of the endless waters. I do not. Your story about them may be true, or it may not. Who will decide between us ? Only one thing about them I have remembered in all my life, one thing which their elders cannot too loudly lament. That is, why do their numbers decline so rapidly at The-place-of-wild-roses (Port Simpson)? Why are their old personal names lying idle by the hundreds, for want of heads on which to bestow them ? Why is there nobody left to mourn the last of many families once prosperous on the lower Skeena? Look at Legyarh himself, he the famous warrior! Where is he to find an heir to succeed him? Kamalmuk, you who are so wise, who have visited the river valleys and the islands on the sea, tell me now : Why is it that diseases eat their people off faster than souls can be reborn in the womb? And is not a new scourge this winter entering our villages on evil winds from their trading post, the dreaded *kwawdzihla*, which kills people young or old in less than a day? Why is it, besides, that Christian Indians sell their wives and daughters for whiskey or silver dollars to the sailors and traders of the salt sea? Chief, I listen with all my soul to the words of enlightenment that are wont to flow from your lips. Here is my own idea : Our brethren have met with a dire calamity for their too speedy acceptance of the White Man's ways and creeds and lack of lawful restraint. But I am no doubt mistaken, being from the backwoods. Are you not yourself a Christian, and perhaps ashamed of your pagan ancestors? And you may become a trader anxious to barter your wife, nay, your nieces and daughters,

for a pile of silver dollars or a keg of fire-water, who knows!"

He desisted, for lack of worthy retort. "Then," enquired he, "you are taking the fateful step forward? You will confront Neetuh, challenge his right to Hanamuk's seat of honour?" She replied firmly, "So have I decided long ago. Nothing can stop me, not even your desertion at Malee's doorstep. Neetuh, for one thing, is too old to be raised to chieftainship. Too soon would he have to drop off. And, besides, what a figure for the leadership of the law-abiding progeny of Sunbeams of the sky, what a man for such a post! An outlaw, no less, dreaded by most but myself, for the uncanny spells from his witch box. Our son Bitten-wrists, on the other hand, may look forward to a long and bright career, if not now debarred from his momentous opportunity."

"If Neetuh has made up his mind to become Hanamuk himself," rejoined her husband, "mind you, he is bound to muster all his weapons to his ends. Alongside of him will stand his father-in-law, Kweenu of Kitwinkul, as well as their relative Wudahayets, both influential chiefs and wealthy, too. Can you fairly defy them all?" Sunbeams replied, "What of it if beside our son stood his blood relatives, not to speak of his allies? Are they so far inferior in numbers and rank to his rival's? Is not your uncle Weehah, Great-wind, whose heir you might still become—as is your undisputed right—is he not to this day the head-chief of Kitwinkul, two grades ahead of Kweenu and three of Wudahayets? Or has he recently been dislodged by his councillors Kweenu and Wudahayets?"

In a tone of reprimand, Kamalmuk retorted, "Weehah is our undisputed chief. So has he ever been that we can remember; so is he to stay. And cursed is the one who would dare covet his lofty post! And what is more: his

seat is mine, whenever I elect to succeed him. But what do I care Have I not warned you of the impending change, the new ways, the other style of leadership . .?" Sunbeams again taunted him: "What other style of leadership I would like to hear? You mean the missionary and the book, or the boss—the man of curses, or the policeman with a gun? Perhaps you may be either, some day, eh?" "Be silent, you impertinent wench!" he interrupted. Then, resuming, "I grant you that Neetuh's schemes are ridiculous. They should miscarry. Far am I from wishing the blackguard goodspeed. I would rather see Bittenwrists ahead of him in the race. Yet, why should we bother our heads? Ten winters hence, perhaps only five, the name of Hanamuk may become a dead-letter, a mere memory. So with those of Weegyat, of Weehah, and the rest. White men's names, that's all the Tsimsyans now care for, and so the other coast nations."

"Yes, I know it full well," grinned Sunbeams. "Kitwinkul Jim, or just—Jim, that's the name you go by, among them; not Kamal-melmuk as among us, for Raven's-ear-lobe. 'Come here, Jim, you d—— son of a ——' is their way of addressing Weehah's eldest nephew, on whose shoulders is tattooed the Grizzly-bear of the mountains. Their name for me is Fanny, whatever that means. The wretched lot thiefs, liars, firebrands. They burnt our town to the ground less than a score of years ago, and when we refused to let other strangers go by, they despatched the man-of-war from Victoria, and took our six leading chiefs as prisoners. Jim and Fanny, eh? that's what you want us to be forever. And what names shall we bestow upon our children? Dick, Tom-tom or Plug-hat I say, Jim, you go and get some firewood, you son of a ——!"

Flushed with anger, Kamalmuk sprang up, motioned as if to slap her across the face, and walked out. She gazed at him, dumb and open-mouthed. Through the open door she could see the people already pacing the lane, and a crowd in front of Malee's feast house. The hour of *yuhs* was drawing nigh. She sighed and remembered that this very day she must take her fate in her hands. The time had come for deeds.

The Spell



AS soon as Sunbeams heard in the distance Weegyat of Segyukla acclaimed upon his appearance in the Wolf lodge, she waved hesitation off her mind with a sweep of her firm spatulate hand. She should not tarry another instant, since the wizard Neetuh might forestall her and occupy Hanamuk's vacant post with regalia consonant to the title, and all would be lost to her. Her son Bitten-wrists, a weakly child, stood before her, religiously silent and intent. She fondled him listlessly, just to forget her trials if she could, to drive away the spectre of some lurking calamity. Then she fastened around him a flowing garment made of strips of Chilkat blanket, white and black, with yellow and pale blue insets in the shape of eyes, round nostrils and pointed ears of animals disposed in a mosaic-like pattern. On his head she placed the Foremost-marten, a headdress made of marten pelts, the tails of which ran upwards, and inherited in her family from time immemorial. She herself donned a full Chilkat robe, the one belonging to the station of Hanamuk and which she had induced the old retired chieftain to relinquish to her care rather than Neetuh's. And she adorned her head with another venerable crest of her kin, the Gyadem-meksihl, a high bonnet of ermine all white but for its strips of mallard duck skin, brown and green, and its opalescent disks of abalone shell from the sea.

She stood up and began to shake a bird-like rattle in her hand, holding her son near her body and humming a cere-

monial chant, marking a slow rhythm as she did to the words, " Who will follow my footsteps into the sky, my footsteps as white as the raven's in the new snow? Who will follow me of the highest chiefs in the vale of Temlaham? Who will journey with me through the gap in the sky vault, into the mirage beyond?" And she looked radiant as in a transfiguration when her son began to sing with her, " My voice will knock the branches off the trees on high, and I will walk in the path of the Sun. . . ."

The rehearsal finished, she preceded her offspring through the village to the Wolf lodge of Malee, with the composure and stately dignity of a priest approaching the altar. Her stout heart meanwhile beat strangely in her breast. She bent her head forward, to hide from passing glances the wild fires that glimmered in her eye. Puny Bitten-wrists escorted her like a shadow, or a victim that is led unawares to the rock of immolation.

As they entered the spacious hall, only half filled as yet, the criers in the doorway hastily proclaimed, " Now it is Neegyamks of Segyukla, Sunbeams, a great woman-chief, entering among us!" and they beat the floor with their long staffs. A round of cheery effusions welcomed her from every side. She grinned and stood still, waiting for her son's due presentation to the gathering. Mindful of her whim, the door-keepers laughingly acknowledged their oversight and shouted, " Here is he, chief-to-be Gamahaum, Bitten-wrists, whose wrists were bitten by the great Bear Spirit," and the crowd once more responded as one does when greeting a dear relative after a prolonged absence.

Sunbeams' wonted place in the *ya-auk* was known to all and sundry to be on the left of the fire that blazes in the centre of the premises. Yet, she passed it without a pause or a glance, and proceeded to the upper end, where

resort the chiefs of households and tribal heads. Behind the vacant seat of Hanamuk she stopped and thereon installed Bitten-wrists with a regal poise that seemed both a consecration and an edict of fate. A tense silence prevailed, filled with wonder and anxiety. The import of her bold move escaped no one, from the proudest leader in the centre at the rear, down to the least guest close to the entrance. What impended, when Neetuh made his contemplated appearance, no one would venture in his own mind to foreshadow. Would the feud come to head, as seemed imminent?

The guests and dignitaries continued to arrive at intervals, one by one, heralded by the criers at the entrance and vociferously saluted at large. Now it was Gurhsan—the Gambler, Kakl—Bush-tail-rat, and he whose name is Tongue-licked, of the Rabbit-people; then, Beeyawsu—Mosquito, Sky-leader, Cawing-Raven, and other notables, variously rated in the scales of public esteem, therefore discriminately greeted among their compeers.

Presently there stood up in the doorway the bushy-haired sorcerer of Segyukla, whose coming everyone that day anticipated with misgiving and curiosity. "Now it is Chief Neetuh," proclaimed the master of ceremony, standing to his right, "Neetuh, whose Tsimsyan name means Looking-at-his-reflection-in-the-water." The staff-bearers stamped the ground mightily and, pretending to dip stone mirrors in the water and complacently to behold their likeness, they intoned Neetuh's ceremonial song as a courtesy, "I gaze at my features in the lake, as I skirt the foothills." And the chorus of young women, the *aleeset*, sitting on the stage—the platforms behind the chiefs—joined in with a soft, ample melody, like that of the wind in pine trees, "And the Rainbow shall lift me from the lake on to the path of the White Star aloft."

The master of ceremonies motioned him to his accustomed station on the right of the fire, about midway up. But, there came no response, not even a nod. The sorcerer stood immobile. He did not budge a foot, but stared from under his thick overhanging eyebrows straight at Hanamuk's seat, now disgraced by a sorry midget. He hardly believed his eyes at first, while repressing all sign of surprise. How dared this young woman, and his niece at that, cross his path and affront him to his face? Impertinence thrice damnable! He grasped the amazing trend of her intrigue, as she stood in his presence, unmasked, a living proof of disloyalty to an elder. And he fixed his steadfast, cavernous eyes on her, as a serpent does, to fascinate its prey. She had rushed the issue to a conclusion and taken the law into her hands, and perhaps frustrated his valid claim to a brother's succession. This, without a warning to him, a real warning to put him on his guard; nay, under the cover of darkness. For he had dismissed the gossip of chatterers, the gossip about her duplicity which had reached his ears more than once before. What a cruel deceit! He had fallen into a trap, had degenerated into an object of ridicule! How incredible to him, a man of his standing, if not respected by all, at least feared for good reason, and conceited beyond measure. Must he forthwith press her to relinquish her hold, choke her with his hands, and be done with the affair? Gladly he would, but it may not be done openly. First in the breach, she now had the upper hand, and she knew it, the villain. She could not be dislodged. Too late. Her husband's relatives, the influential families of Weehah and of the host Malee himself, would undoubtedly stand as her sponsors and her son's ceremonial fathers in the *ya-auk*. How utterly vile and abominable!

The *ksenahl* song ceased, and the last words of formal endearment to him gave way to silence, then mutterings, even to gurgling sounds like repressed laughter, some obviously intended to embarrass him, others for his rival. Two chiefs present, Weegyat and Earthquake, could not let the misunderstanding engender immediate outbursts of hostility. Outsiders themselves in the quarrel, they viewed it with equanimity, provided it should not invade their forum; and this instantly loomed up. They joined hands in an open effort to reconcile, if not the contenders, at least their claims in a compromise that would insure peace.

First they attempted to induce Sunbeams, in an argument whispered to her ear, to reconsider her venture along a dangerous path, as dangerous for her perhaps as for her offspring. So young and feeble was the child that for some years he should fairly be spared the ordeal of a function and a responsibility too heavy for his age. Time was his and the future. Otherwise with the other candidate. In less than a decade Neetuh would fall out of the ranks. His advancing years would tell. Perhaps he would retire earlier. Pressure could be brought to bear. And then would be Bitten-wrists' opportunity, without the least damage or hidden danger to himself. Did she grasp their meaning well? Did she not fear so to arouse a man of his calling? From his eye already flashed a condemnation portending an evil spell, a spell that could not fail to work mischief. Strong arguments all these, and their experience in current affairs smacked of wisdom. They went on coaxing her, but to no visible effect. She would not even condescend to look at them. They were wasting their breath. And her son remained like a stone effigy under her immobile hand.

Unable to conceal their discomfiture, the negotiators next approached Neetuh and sketched out a plan, a com-

promise, verily the only solution in sight. Withdrawal pure and simple at this stage was out of the question. So they confessed. Several families of high standing, the fathers' and the husband's, or wife's, as well as the mothers', were involved, and their pride must enter into court. How unfortunate the misunderstanding, for only a misunderstanding could it be ! and how seriously perplexing ! Neetuh acknowledged their good offices with a sullen countenance and meanwhile kept staring fiercely at the usurpers. Resentment rankled in his heart.

If he and his niece, they expounded, would only consider an equitable adjustment, let us say the partition in two equal shares of their common patrimony, enough would still grace the new lots to allow for the prosperity of their henceforth divergent issues. Were not their rights and chattels among the most enviable? Were not their hunting and fishing preserves inexhaustible, and their prerogatives reminiscent of the semi-divine origin of their forebears in an earthly paradise, Temlaham of ancient times? Of the seven emblems belonging to the family as a whole and vested in the chief, the two outstanding ones might fall, the Rainbow to his hands, the Stars to hers or rather, her son's. The minor ones, the Conical-hat with rings atop indicating honours, and the Wooden-platter for festivals, long inherited in the fold and adorned with grouse carvings at both ends, would naturally be allotted to him. So they would suggest. And two others, to balance up, would pass to Sunbeams' possession, be it the Ermine headgear with duckskin trimmings and abalone shell, and the Foremost-marten. These were now hers to don; otherwise, an accomplished fact. Three emblems each, and creditable ones, too; more than most outsiders could boast of. As to the seventh, the Wild-geese, why puzzle it out beforehand? Peace, so vital to all, should not be jeopardized for



HE-KNOWS-THE-SKY, ALIMLARHÆ,
An old chief of the Skeena

By W Langdon Kihn

the least of a set of symbols already exceeding the fingers of one hand in numbers. And the hunting territories of Hanamuk, and his fishing stations, what of them? To Neetuh should be awarded Water-of-the-long-stream, emptying into the Segyukla at the point where stands a cabin; or, instead, if he chose, Place-where-the-creeks-meet, truly a fine preserve for marten, fisher, beaver and bear. Not the least snag in the channel, when it came to salmon fishing stations on the Ksan! The Rapids, with a movable platform wherefrom to hook fish, may fitly pass on to his niece; while Place-of-bees, with its fence and trap in a swift current, should come to him, a virile and muscular fisherman. And both relatives might share Saydeeh, the landing on which the glutton Trickster of old once threw up fat, since here usually were erected two platforms for the sundry members of the family. Thus impartially sundered, the related houses would henceforth thrive apart, as had often happened to others before; they would thrive and settle their own destinies to suit their wishes and inalienable rights. What plan would he himself propound, if he could contrive one more comprehensive and acceptable? Let him open his mind to them, that they, his friends, may strive to reduce Sunbeams' lust for undivided leadership to sensible proportions!

Reasonable as it looked, the scheme still further inflamed Neetuh's temper. But for his niece's rashness there was no earthly reason to parcel out a family scarcely large enough to hold its own in the struggle for rank and influence in the tribal affairs, particularly since it had lost several of its members in the last epidemic of smallpox or through desertion to Christianity and mission villages abroad. Only as a last resort would he sanction such an odious compromise, to him tantamount to disaster for the most ancient households of Segyukla. So he emphatically expressed his

disapproval to the mediators, not in a way, however, wholly to curb their endeavour.

They returned to Sunbeams, presently, with definite concessions as a bait for her good-will. To her and her son would devolve the choicest possessions of her family in permanent keeping; the Stars of heaven, for their outstanding emblem, and, as personal insignia, the Chilkat robes and the head-dresses of ermine and marten; as also, the hunting territories of Where-the-creeks-meet, or, if she preferred it, of Water-of-the-long-stream; and the fishing platform of the Rapids, not to mention another at Saydeeh.

She interrupted their enumeration with a turn of the hand, pointing to Bitten-wrists at her knees. While they gazed inquiringly, she unfastened his robe, and ordered him to stand upon his seat, his shoulders bared for all present to contemplate. Thus it came to public knowledge that on the child's body were tattooed marks in the shape of rings, representing the Sun crest, and across his loins, the curved triple stripes which plainly symbolize the Rainbow. Thereupon she impatiently motioned her father-in-law at the rear at once to espouse her cause, if he were worth his word, and proceed with the accustomed ceremony for raising a chief. And the nephews of Weehah of Kitwinkul indeed moved forward in response with armfuls of blankets and ground-hog pelts; they piled them high in the aisle, for eventual distribution to the guests as gifts in honour of the new incumbent.

Turning sideways, she ironically enquired from Weegyat of Segyukla, "If you, Large-person, resolve to invest the Rainbow on the knave who loiters on the doorstep, how will you tear it off the body of him who shall be Hanamuk before the day is passed?" At Earthquake, now cautiously retreating, she flung the taunt, "Thanks to Earthquake, thanks to him, who has so far put himself out

and volunteered his services, innumerable thanks ! What a pity it is that the shrewd diplomat of Kitwanga should be no better informed. For does he not know that Hanamuk still owns other regalia and estates, which should not be so lightly dismissed? That is, the Wild-geese badge, and Person-of-the-hills; and—should any one ever forget!—the Sun-dogs many times emblazoned on buttoned blankets or engraved on the long shafts of standing poles."

The ritual for the elevation of Bitten-wrists to the rank of Hanamuk was now unmistakably beginning in earnest; the gifts for his recognition stood in piles already shoulder high; and the chorus of maidens, with painted faces and brightly striped raiments, had intoned the convivial chants, " Taste it again, O chief, the red berry that will feed you like Blue-jay. . . ." Seemingly nothing could at this stage hinder its progress. Sunbeams had won the day, and Neetuh had brought down an avalanche of shame upon his proud head.

Crestfallen, the sorcerer staggered back to the door unescorted, and shouted over his shoulder, his mouth foaming, " You, arch-traitor, betake yourself out of my sight! There is trouble ahead for you!" " Never, as long as I live ! " bravely protested Sunbeams. And forthwith she tied her son's hair into a knot over his head with a weasel skin. Before he drew off, the maddened sorcerer cried aloud, " And you, miserable child, shall not disgrace my seat very long!" The guests heard the threat. Shocked at its evil significance, they protested, " Have you heard it? . . . *Siksu*, a spell!" The murmur of " *Siksu, siksu*" brushed around the house, with the remarks, " The boy's life now is not worth a snap of my finger; it hangs at the end of a long hair. *Siksu, siksu !* How truly damnable !"

Hanamuk Inducted



IT was around a bonfire of burning logs and stacks of varied utensils and articles intended as gifts—pelts, tanned moose hides, blankets, calico garments and foreign goods such as suited the Skeena River natives at the end of the last century—that the members of the allied tribes reassembled in Malee's lodge after sunset, on the second day of the Kitwinkul *ya-auk*. And there prevailed among them undisguised eagerness and suspense. The elders had busied themselves from eve to morn, and from midday to sundown, in fruitless peace endeavours between Neetuh and his niece, the one enraged like a wounded bear ; the other, grim and firm as a rock.

The stage was set for happenings that still hung in the balance, in spite of all efforts to map out their course as prudence or passion dictated. In the light of unprejudiced opinion, Sunbeams was bound to win out ; of this, scarce a doubt. Yet, far be it from her mind to count upon her husband's assistance. For Kamalmuk kept veering with every wind that blew, like a weathercock on a gable ; now being incensed at Neetuh's threat against his son, then blaming his wife for her indiscretions, and meanwhile refusing, as in the past few winters, to participate in *ya-auk* affairs otherwise than as an observer whose casual seat is picked at random near the doorway. But the score would be hers for her strategic advantage over Neetuh : she had enlisted the support of Great-wind-in-the-air and the Wolves of Kitwinkul, which made up for Kamalmuk's default.

They would promote her son's advancement, would be the child's ceremonial fathers before the night was over, would cast the full weight of their influence in his favour. No mean achievement ! The ruling Wolf chiefs of the river and the lake had finally espoused her cause : Weehah, Great-wind-of-the-air, her father-in-law ; his clan brother Malee, the *ya-auk* host ; Arteeh or No-fat, of the Rabbit-people ; and, none the least of them, Spawh of the more remote village of Kitenmaks, at the river forks (now Hazelton). They had one and all pledged to act as brothers and confederates, hand in hand, since various symptoms of a conspiracy against their social standing had aroused their suspicion. Kweenu and his henchmen, so it had come to their ears, would stand as Neetuh's sponsors in the feast and avail themselves of an opportunity to enhance their prestige as Ravens at the expense of the other clans. Now keenly on their guard, spying in ambush, the Wolves had rallied together, firmly determined to thwart any scheme that might upset the old Kitwinkul hierarchy and remove the head-chieftainship in a bold stroke to the hands of their born opponents, as might well happen any day with the complicity of the sundry Raven clans at large, however distantly related they be. Thus it came to pass that the minor quarrel between uncle and niece entered the broader tribal arena, where rivalry between the Fireweeds, the Ravens, the Wolves, and the Eagles for higher rank and greater fame has prevailed since the dawn of ages.

Even before Kweenu dared openly to divulge his partiality for Neetuh, he found himself forestalled in the initial step and sorely nonplussed. His hesitancy was to blame, or a creeping fear of defeat and humiliation in a hazardous adventure ; for he had descried an ominous bustle in the other camp, after the suspension of the ritual on the previous night.

The first to make his appearance as a ceremonial participant was not Neetuh, as the Ravens figured out, but Beeyawsu—Weehah's senior nephew—who came forth in grand dramatic style from behind the curtain hiding the entrance to the secret chamber at the rear of a chief's lodge. Staff in hand, his hair significantly strewn with fluffy eagle's down, he advanced to the aisle and slowly turned round to the four corners, that every spectator might admire his new robe. A startling creation was it in truth, illustrating the name of Mosquito, his own, in an elaborate bird design, with feathered wings spread wide on both sides, and a long woodpecker-like beak. The fantastic profile of its red flannel applique stood out against a background of dark blue cloth sumptuously trimmed along the edges with shell buttons all white, which mirrored the flickering light of the fireplace. Thus displaying his title more ostentatiously than a diplomat might his credentials, Mosquito meant his peers to remember the symbol of his name : "Beeyawsu am I by your grace, Mosquito, whose beak tapers like a hummingbird's and feathers spread fan-wise in the air ; Beeyawsu am I, the Master of ceremony and prospective heir to Great-wind-of-the-air, that I may, in Kamalmuk's absence, impart with a loud voice the commands of our chief to all living beings and convey the words of his mouth to the four corners of the earth." And he raised his arms to the corresponding pillars of the house, intoning with solemnity the song :

"A noble chief will enter our valley at my bidding, will return from the land of shades which is forever hidden to mortal eye beyond the sacred veil." The *aleeset* chorus softly repeated, "The chief will return at his command from the mystery land."

Furtive glances in the compact crowd stole in rapid review from seat to seat around the lodge, from that of Hanamuk to those of Neetuh of Segyukla and Kamalmuk of Kitwinkul, which were still vacant. Sunbeams meanwhile sat without regalia at her own minor station among women dignitaries; and Kamalmuk remained among the rabble near the entrance, blowing clouds of smoke from a briar pipe—"a gift from Mister Beach," he volunteered to whoever cared to know—, as if thus aggressively to reassert his faith in progress and modernity and his aloofness from obsolete bondage.

"I have borrowed the skin of Beeyawsu, the great Mosquito, and I don it as my own," continued the master of ceremony, shaking a small cedar clapper in his right hand, which barely emerged from the folds of his garment; "I don it, and my voice buzzes above the common noises, and reaches out into space like that of thunder of the air." The deep rumble of hidden wooden drums resounded in the secret chamber, while he paused and his limbs trembled in feigned agitation. Then he resumed his ritual chant, slowly stepping around the fire waving his arms in the air.

"The mighty Beeyawsu crept into my garments, crept as gently as daylight does in the wake of darkness at sunrise. Behold him, ye all assembled, as he clears the trail for the great *halla-it* once more returning to our midst!

"The mountain tops brighten when the sun visits the gates of dawn, and they brighten now that the titled leader of Segyukla surges from the black waters beyond the veil, surges from the lake where dance the shadows of chiefs yet unborn." The chorus echoed, "The mountain tops brighten when the sun visits the gates of dawn. . . .," with growing impetus, from subdued inceptive modulations to a swaying hosanna in an ending climax.

Outmanoeuvred, Kweenu determined to save his face by daring tactics. He would hinder Beeyawsu's performance at every turn, warp its course into awkward byways; and, unable though he was to check it altogether, he might succeed in covering it with ridicule and discredit. Hence he forthwith broke out with his array of followers into prolonged vociferous cheers, much to the discomfort of the singers and their kinsmen.

"*Wayhla gunyas Neetuh* . . .," they clamoured lustily; "here is Neetuh resuming his seat, our son-in-law, the great Segyukla standard-bearer of the Sun and Rainbow clan!" Neetuh at the call stepped forth over the threshold slate mirror in hand, his face pale and haggard, his shoulders covered with a grizzly-bear robe, and his head surmounted by a headgear of long red hair of shredded cedar bark loosely twisted, like snakes, into a shivering tangle.

Panic-stricken, Sunbeams instantly crept as a cougar towards Hanamuk's unoccupied seat, to hold it bodily against her adversaries, lest they contemplated an actual dash for it. Kamalmuk, fuming with indignation, approached along the wall in like direction. Neither could bear the thought of tricky usurpation, of foul play, since the prize at stake was fairly their son's. They found themselves spontaneously reunited on that score, ready to leap forth together like wild mates, cost what it might, the most dreaded of all extremities perhaps—bloodshed.

But there was little cause for their impulsive fear. It hardly entered Kweenu's sagacious mind to resort to a form of aggression so outlandish, so fraught with jeopardy. His nephews did naught but escort their crestfallen ally to a post of honour created for his rehabilitation next to those of family heads, a post to be suppressed at his eventual demise : "Here is a chief, if ever there was one!" they heralded him all the way, blowing bird's down to his face

and re-enacting the wanderer scene wherein the slate mirror symbolizes a lake. The trend of their peaceful intentions no sooner revealed itself than Sunbeams, reassured, slipped off to her place as though nothing had happened, while Kamalmuk skulked out of sight, obviously conscious of his inconsistency and abashed at his lapse from his own professions.

"Are you not frightened, O people, and quaking in your fear?" exclaimed Beeyawsu, adroitly resuming his cue as the turmoil died down. "You stand on the edge of the earth, near a chasm. The spirits dwell here, and closer still the monsters that haunt lonely abodes. Are you not frightened, and quaking in your fear? The ghosts are rising out of the dark, with a chief in their midst, a chief whose shade is reborn among us at every generation. They are coming, the monsters of the dark; behold the ghosts, they are coming, *hauno hauno hiyo*!"

Unearthly sounds, shrill or thunderous in turn, broke out behind the sacred partition, over the roof, underground, then around the lodge in the stillness of night. They were, to most of the guests, the voices of spirits unseen which instil awe and reverence in the hearts of youthful believers and undeceived commoners. To those versed in mysteries, as were the old men and the initiates, they issued merely from cedar bugles, large or small, ingenuously contrived to produce weird noises, or from twin-piped whistles, rattles and drums, all of which are ever kept in utter secrecy, and brought out at night to conjure mystic visions; still, for this conspiracy none the less terrifying to all and ghostly.

Through a rift in the curtain of mystery now began to appear the chief whose resurrection the songs had forecasted, the *halla-it* whose advent into the half darkened lodge resembled the rise of the moon from behind mountain crests

after dusk. Several beholders, breaking into sighs, enquired in plaintive fashion, "What has the Sky accomplished, the Sky above?" Whereupon the fire-keepers hastened to revive the fire, casting on it dry cedar splinters and ladlefuls of candle-fish oil.

Beeyawsu intoned the Song of Entrance, as soon as the flames leaped around the burning logs and disclosed the approach of a new *halla-it* from the rear, his head adorned with a princely crown of embossed heraldic figures and sea-lion bristles: "Let it cease, the cry from your throats, O proud unseen ones! Let it cease, that we may contemplate the *halla-it*, he who is now reborn in his kin." Far from granting his prayer forthwith, the ghosts clamoured only the more vigorously. They joined in an uproar; then, the next moment, fell apart and vied with each other. "Why are you thus tearing the sky vault asunder? Your voices are deafening, they startle all living beings. They soar through space like that of Lepleep, Thunder, when he smites the earth with his snake belt." Appeased at last, the mysterious visitors withdrew one by one from their hidden posts and departed for the homeland of souls beyond mortal reach.

"A great brightness illuminates the air, like that of the Sun, wherever appears the ancient one after his reincarnation," cried out Beeyawsu, in loud sustained tones. The flames in the hearth leaped high, for the keepers were pouring oil on the burning tree trunks; and the assembly now plainly beheld the *halla-it*, as he stood directly in front of Hanamuk's seat. No other was he than Sunbeams' child attired in the gorgeous if burdensome insignia of his new office. The weakling waited there motionless like an emblem of carved wood, whose crown and too ample Chilkat garments ill-fitted his small stature, helpless as ever an adolescent could be, his lips half parted from

fright or perhaps exhaustion, and his round eyes opened on a world of terrors untold and fatal. His mother gazed at him proudly, lovingly ; and the multitude did its duty, greeting his induction with the accustomed cheers, nods and occasional grunts.

Great-wind-of-the-air, the Wolf head-chief, gave out a solemn utterance for all to remember : "A noted leader of men, whose ancestors once lived at Temlaham, is now restored to his post. Listen to my words, you who are present, and never forget them! Hanamuk himself again graces his seat of honour among us. Welcome to him in the *ya-auk*, whose deeds in the past were worthy and memorable ! Welcome to him hereabouts under his own name fully expressed as borne by his forefathers :— The Raven never perforates his ear lobes for the use of abalone pendants, as we humans are wont to do—. Welcome to him, I repeat, that the tribes afar and the nations of the Nass and the Sea Coast may learn the news of his advent!" Walking a few paces forward, the aged chief blew handfuls of down towards Hanamuk, while the kinsmen of the new Segyukla title-holder approached the piles of blankets and articles in the aisle from every side and began in earnest the distribution of gifts to the heads of all the families present—a proceeding of capital importance, since it insured a liberal fee to the participants, active or passive as may be, for their acceptance of a successor to a function long familiar in their councils.

Beeyawsu's younger brother, Grouse-basking-in-the-sun, danced his way to the fireplace, holding a finely chiselled tray in his hands ; thence, to Hanamuk's seat, where he laid it at the feet of the new occupant, chanting engagingly the Blue-jay melody, "Taste it over again, O man of the hour, the delicacy that nourishes the mighty ; taste the

red berry which Blue-jay feasts upon in the season of *sint.*" Dipping a spoon of mountain sheep horn into the tray, he filled it with dried berries and tendered it to the youthful Fireweed dignitary. The child, after casting an anguished glance towards his mother, partook of the food which is the privilege of the elect at state functions. And the *aleeset* chorus repeated the invitation until the end of his banquet, "Taste it over again, O high-born one, and be fed like the divine Blue-jay in the season of *sint*!"

The hour had come, entrancing to all kinsmen whose emblems are the Sun and the Rainbow, for repeating the hymn which forever remains coupled with the name of Hanamuk as a precious appanage. The *aleeset* maidens intoned it fervently :

"Strike me as I walk on the path down from the heights, strike me! The earth quakes under my feet, the feet of a wanderer journeying home through the fires of the setting sun. I tarry along the river shores, seeking him who has seen the Chief of the Sky with his eyes, seeking him who can tell his vision, the vision wherein all are alive that were dead. Are not the fallen resurrected? Has he not returned whom I am looking for, 'The Raven who never perforates his ear lobes for the insertion of abalone pendants'? Strike me as I walk on the path down from the heights, strike me!"

Hanamuk, assisted by his mother, who for precaution now kneeled behind him, responded with a fervid, yet wavering, voice, which at times seemed on the verge of breaking :

"The large rocks frighten me ; they roll down the hillsides in numbers. Fallen from the stars are they, trooping along the footpath, walking alongside of me, the large rocks down the hillsides."

No sooner had the maidens struck the refrain, "The earth quakes under my feet, the feet of a wanderer journeying home through the fires of the setting sun," than Hanamuk turned to his mother in poignant distress, complaining, "O mother, the fever in my body, the flashes in my head!" And he began to whine. "Hush, son! Courage for a while longer!" she urged to his ear. "Would a great chief cry for pain on the day of his reincarnation?"

Both mother and child resumed the hymn, punctuating its cadence with stiff jerks of the bird rattles in their hands:

"Who will follow my footsteps into the sky, my footsteps as white as the Raven's in the fresh snow? Who, of the highest chiefs in the vale of Temlaham? Who will follow me through the gap in the sky vault, into the mirage beyond?"

The maidens alternated, "When the chiefs see his foot-prints white as the Raven's in the fresh snow, they will journey with him into the sky."

In a feeble tone, contrasting strangely with the sense of the song, the child went on, "My voice will knock the branches off the trees on high, and I will walk in the path of the Sun." And he fell forward in a heap, his arms softly dropping like the wings of a grouse when the arrow of doom pierces her feathered breast.

Sunbeams instantly bent down, lifted him from the ground, shook him in an attempt to revive his senses—perhaps he was only drowsy?—and, startled, sorrowfully murmured, "He is tired, I fear, the poor child. We paced the trail laboriously together, he, stooping under a load on his back too heavy for his strength; we paced the long trail all day, the winter trail from Segyukla, that winds its way around the peaks and over the foothills. He could endure the strain no longer. And his mind, besides, was greatly agitated over the event that means so

much to him, so much to us all, the Fireweeds of the smooth waters. His thoughts throb in his forehead, they throb so intensely that I feel them with my hand. Perspiration trickles down his brow. His heart pulses in his swollen breast, it pulses for his longing, his constant longing for the high honours now about to grace his young life. It pulses fiercely, like a skin drum, to the point of breaking. O the dear child, so ambitious, so worthy of his forefathers! . . . Cannot you see that he is tired, exhausted, that he is only asleep, unable to keep his eyes open any longer, now that the night sits in our midst. What should I do all alone with him? . . ."

She tried to hold him up, to arouse him out of his torpor. She blew into his face, shook his shoulders. He rallied feebly, half opened his eyes for a moment, only a moment, tried his best to smile. His head fell back, and his eyes turned white, in a curved slit. Terror twisted her face, as with a merciless hand. Unable to induce her child to sit up, she gazed at him helplessly and broke into tears.

"My son is ill," she lamented. "I would not believe it at first. I laughed at his complaint. It was a chill in his head, from long exposure in the forest, a pain in his breast, that would soon pass off. I nursed him as well as I could, without the help of the medicine-man. He was not very ill. He recovered at once. So I believed. Yet, his trouble was not fully removed. He has relapsed, relapsed at the wrong moment. He must be nursed again, must sleep for a while. Then, he will stand up once more in the presence of the chiefs, stand up this very night. He will respond to Blue-jay, and eat again of the red berries, the food of the mighty. My son is ill. He must sleep a while, here at my feet, rolled up in a blanket. When he is rested, he will proudly stand up as becomes his

rank, and sing the glorious song wherein he tells of fallen stars trooping along his footpath. . . ."

She set him on her lap, caressed him nervously, and said, musing, "An *adarem-haayuk* is the cause, an evil spirit. It entered his mouth at night, and lodged in his veins for his torment. Since early morn it has consumed his blood from head to foot." The child's head tilted back on her shoulder and his chin pointed upwards. In spite of her alarm, growing more acute every moment, she did not withdraw from the *ya-auk*. She clung grimly to the prize now won securely, the signal function which a long chain of Hanamuks had filled for countless generations.

Kweenu was too keenly observant not to discern his opportunity for further obstruction. Under his patronage, Neetuh would now improvise *neeyendza* songs, wherein to taunt his rivals and carp at their plight. The sorcerer was famed for dramatic satire, an art which had won him not a few admirers and left him a host of enemies. Let his adversaries be shamed, belittled! No better occasion for ridiculing them than the present. What a humiliation for the Fireweeds and their sponsors the Wolves, a humiliation that could hardly be wiped off without a profuse distribution of gifts! The crowned head of one of their foremost households had fallen to bite the dust as he was being flourished in public to their faces. Hanamuk himself resurrected, still, prostrate and humbled, unable to sing to its conclusion the hymn of his forebears for his induction, too immature to raise his head proudly and dance as becomes a *halla-it* on state occasions, too contemptible to shake with jerks of the head the bird's down inserted between the sea-lion bristles of his crown as a symbol of peace and goodwill. His mother, ay! he must still have a mother to nurse him, to guide him arm on hand, mince the traditional words and place them in his mouth, to prop

him up as she might a manikin for play, to rock him to sleep in her lap, O shades of past Hanamuks of Segyukla, of bold warriors and hunters issued one and all from Rays-of-the-Sun in the beginning.

The thought of taunting his kinsmen at once tempted Neetuh and stirred up his poetic vein Drawing out of his robe his owl-faced rattle, and reclining forward, elbows on his knees, he began to sing between his teeth :

"My heart throbs at the memory of times that are past When I look back I see the mountains, my birth-place, the high ridges wherefrom descends my path. My heart throbs at the memory of times that are past!

"The Chief of the Sky no longer fulfills his promises, no longer favours man with visions for him to tell, wherein all are alive that were dead And the fallen no longer walk back to Temlaham through the fires of the setting sun. O, my heart throbs at the memory of times that are past!"

Raising his voice, as though facile inspiration at last heaved his bosom, he sang with melancholy bitterness·

"A boast was it that beguiled me, a boast from his smooth tongue—that the earth quaked under his feet, that his voice knocked the branches off trees in the sky, that he had journeyed home through the fires of the setting sun. For he has never seen the Chief of the Sky with his eyes, who trembled at the mere sight of large rocks fallen from the stars, of rocks rolling along his footpath. My heart throbs at the memory of times that are past."

No parody is more widely odious than that which perverts time-honoured utterances Neetuh's distortion of the sacred song of his ancestors to suit his whim was an insult to his own kinsmen. In the mouth of any other it would have provoked instant retaliation. Once again the sorcerer was playing a lone hand, a losing one in the



HANAMUK OR SUNBEAMS (FANNY JOHNSON)

The cause of the Skeena River "Rebellion", forty years ago
Her crests—the Stars, the Moon and the Rainbow

By W. Langdon Kihn

long run, to evil-doers like him whose black art thrives selfishly under cover. Sunbeams curbed her indignation and watched for the earliest chance to recapture her audience, for there still remained not the least part of the ritual—the recital of her family's genesis, of the *ada-orh*, wherein is related the origin of her ancestors in the fateful days of yore.

Neetuh had not yet drained the font of his impious sarcasm. Jerking his rattle slantingly he continued his improvisation :

"The little crab-apple tree has thrust its roots on the mount where dwell the mighty ; its limbs bend down under a weight which it cannot bear, the weight of the Sun, the Stars and the Rainbow. And it has fallen before the high winds that would have swept its name to the four corners of the world. The poor little crab-apple tree! O my heart throbs at the memory of times that are past!

"A great *halla-it* have I known him to be, bright as the Sun and tall as the Rainbow. Yet how puny now, how truly despicable! He swooned at the chirping of Blue-jay, and screened his eyes before the great light that shone for him aloft. How restful must be his heart now, that he slumbers as in death! A slave is he who would be greater than I, who would hold up the sky-vault with his hands in my stead. Call him a slave, a *kha*, who is not fully reborn from among the shades, yet who would of all the chiefs be the most haughty in the land! My heart throbs at the memory of times that are past!"

He drew his rattle within his robe ; his song was ended. And his limbs shook with a faint tremor, as his high brow loosened beads of perspiration that glimmered in the fireside light as will abalone pearls on a gruesome mask.

Sunbeams, who had already laid down her son in a blanket at her feet, for him to rest a while and recover, retorted in like vein. If her chant were not of her own invention, it had the advantage of familiarity with all listeners.

"*Am-igel-raude. . . .*," she at once intoned in a clarion voice; "a cheerful heart beats in my breast, a cheerful heart!" The Fireweeds, the Wolves and not a few Eagles merrily joined her in the tune, ever so popular, which is meant as a rebuke to petty chiefs: "The *halla-it* owns a happy heart, who has shot his bolt, however trifling the bolt. He might be great among the nobles, were it not for the lower depths where he belongs. Have I not heard it whispered of him, that he is a back-biter, spreading tales behind the people ever since he was born to manhood? A cheerful heart beats in my breast, a cheerful heart!"

The rabble near the doorway and the folk of little consequence elsewhere were still writhing with laughter, when Sunbeams stood up with determination and solemnly began the recital of her *ada-orh:*

"The beaver-hunters arrived at their mother's lodge in Temlaham after sunset. . . ." As she paused intentionally, head-chief Wechah, Great-wind-of-the-air, warmly commended her intention, declaring, "Hearken, you all, that you may know and never plead ignorance! Hearken! In Hanamuk's keeping are the sacred traditions of Temlaham, of epic struggles between the Fireweeds and the Ravens, of an age of bliss in the land of plenty, and of the downfall and dispersion long ago. Hearken, you all, and remember to the end of time! Its rehearsal will recall how the hunters of Keemelay once went down to defeat at the hands of their neighbours the Kunradals; how the last of them, Skawah and her daughter, were

redeemed by Sunbeams of the Sky, and how the perennial difference between the Fireweeds and the Ravens was smothered in fire and blood, as we still remember to this day."

So encouragingly partonized, Sunbeams launched into the most significant deed of her career. In a clear voice, she related the ancient narrative in full, which was to last far into the night, the hoary winter night that had swept over the desolate land of Temlaham.

KAMALMUK

SECOND PART

Measles and Death



DISEASE broke out among the Ksan tribes assembled at Kitwinkul for their annual festivals ; and it spread from house to house with the rapidity of wildfire. It was mysterious and deadly. The epidemic—which the White Man knows under the name of measles—swept through the native villages of the West Coast and the Skeena River in the early winter of 1887, and it proved one of the most destructive in the annals of the country. No one knew whence it came, nor at whose bidding. Before it lost its impetus and passed onwards for want of fresh victims, most of the people, whether young or old, had bent their head under its foul breath, scores of them in every village never to raise it again.

There were some who averred that they had seen ghosts, in the neighbourhood of Antkees, paddling their way upstream in large dug-outs, obviously for a raid. They had kept a close watch over them, had tried to bring them to a halt, questioning them, "What business is yours up there?" but had secured no reply. When finally they shot arrows with hard burnt points at them, as is done to frighten evil spirits, they shouted, "Who are you, great paddlers, so to invade our river and disturb our sleep?"

An answer came back in a sea coast dialect, "*Snanameehaw* —, *snanameehaw*—. We are heading on and on ;" and their dull voices drawled in the night like those of ghosts, of *luleks* and *semilaws*. Hail had fallen at midnight, and a fierce wind had blown up the river in the wake of the canoes. The news of this discovery spread abroad, for it bore every mark of authenticity. Then the plague had made its appearance on all sides, bursting out of the human body in florid eruptions. The people began to die, in spite of the medicine-men's obstinate efforts ; they died like salmon stranded at the headwaters after the spawning season. Many were they who bathed in the snow to cool their limbs, consumed by fever, and expel the spirits ; but they also died, only the more swiftly. There was no remedy in sight, only despair and death.

And who was to blame for the disaster? "The Ramkseewah, the stranger whose skin is pale like a barkless log," prevailed as a convincing answer in most quarters, but nowhere more emphatically than at the river forks, where dwell the Kitenmaks or Torch-fishing tribe, the Mild-people of Hagwelgate, and the Kispayaks of the Hiding-place. The white traders and pioneers of Hazelton —a modern name for Kitenmaks—were held guilty on more than one count. Head-chief Kitemraldo lost through the scourge three daughters whom he loved dearly, one of them, the eldest, repeatedly crying while in the throes of death, "Give me some sugar, more sugar." From this the sorrowing parents, and how many others after them, could recognize the author of their trials. And who was he to be sure but Mr. Clifford, of the Hudson's Bay Company? As a proof of his villainy : The Company never sold sugar to the natives at its Hazelton counter, for want of a sufficient supply. The rule was plain enough ; it had stood for years. Yet, Mr. Clifford had relaxed his

discipline this winter for the first time. While he invariably served it in paper bags to his compatriots, he had doled it out to the Indians with his bare hands in whatever receptacle they afforded, silk or cotton handkerchiefs, empty cans or soiled rags as they pleased. Therein lay the witchery, the abominable tool contrived for their injury.

Kitemraldo declared, and he was noted among the wise men whose words carried weight, "In sugar thus served in handfuls dwell evil spirits injurious only to us, not to the Ramkseewahs. They are pale-faced like ghosts and tiny, and bearded as the traders themselves." No white person, indeed, was known to suffer from them in the least, still less to have died. As an outcome, there was a disquieting uproar in the Indian lodges on the hill all around, one night. After lamenting over the dead, the mourners ran out in the open. They yelled vindictively, "Kill the white dogs below!" drawing an ugly response from scattered points along the edge of the bluff : "Kill them, Kill them all!" The trading post was reinforced with sandbags the next day, and most of the settlers, a mere handful, deemed it prudent to seek shelter within its barricade.

Among the first victims of the scourge was Bittenwrists, of the Fireweed clan. He breathed his last the day that followed his installment as household chief and his assumption of the name Hanamuk. No sooner had his remains been conveyed to Segyukla than his younger brother Kumas also succumbed to the same *hayeh-leelaks* spirits. The shock to Kamalmuk no less than to his wife Sunbeams was stupendous, almost beyond immediate comprehension. Mourning and sorrow reunited them under their connubial roof at Segyukla, while most of

their tribesmen still tarried at Kitwinkul for the postponement of the festivals.

After a brief period of unbroken silence, Sunbeams began to whine at night, as if harassed by nightmares. Her faculties, befogged at first, surrendered gradually to the full sense of her loss. Day by day she found greater solace in moans and sighs and, at times, in loud wailing and bitter tears. Like the others she learnt that ghosts had been heard travelling up the river in the dead of night, that they entered the human body at the least provocation, through all apertures, the mouth, the nostrils, and the ears. They had taken the life of her sons. That was all a thing of the past for her now, accursed and irretrievable. One score, however, still remained in abeyance, begging for a speedy settlement. Clifford had bewitched many Gitksans in his neighbourhood with his foul sugar doles. Of this, little doubt. Let him get his deserts! But to him could not fairly be imputed the harm done at Kitwinkul, still less the death of Hanamuk and Kumas. Another was to blame, nearer at hand. And she felt that her relatives, even her erring husband, inclined to the same conclusion. How bitter her resentment, how imperious her craving for retaliation!

Neetuh was guilty. No one could deny it. Who had not heard his threat, at the *ya-auk*? "Arch-traitor. . . ., there is trouble ahead for you!" Who had not heard this, addressed to herself; to her son, "And you, miserable child, shall not disgrace my seat very long!" A spell was it, a true spell, and deadly, from the breath of a vicious sorcerer aroused for mischief. Naught else. Her sons in consequence had fallen ill the very next day, fallen ill and passed away under her eyes, within the narrow space of a day and a night. And a spell is the most odious of

all transgressions, infringing upon life, and therefore calling for commensurate punishment.

The conclusion seemed unavoidable. Kamalmuk dreaded it in his heart ; he had a secret desire to flee to Medzee-aden lake far away, before he heard it confirmed in her mouth. He shuddered from head to foot when, one morning, after a night of lamentation, she moaned softly, deliberately, "Kill him! Kill Neetuh!" The words were like the hand of fate reaching out for him. To kill Neetuh, the murderer of his sons, that was his duty, according to unimpeachable custom. He was their father, also their avenger. The evil-doer deserved no mercy on earth ; no sorcerer caught red-handed expects any. Only retaliation. No one would shield him ; he was an outcast, whose retribution comes straight from the shoulder, unprotested, like death to a rabid dog.

Yet, Kamalmuk had no intention of raising his hand against his wife's uncle, if he could shun the deed. Blood-revenge was a Ksan law harking back to dark ages. Like obsolete customs, it must be rooted out. The only salvation lay in the new guidance : authority vested in the hands of one man, and the punishment of criminals. That one man was the towering magistrate whom he had gazed at more than once, either enthroned at a high desk above the common run in a court house ; or, at other times, travelling the trails, a pack on his back, and selling justice for a price as one does beaver pelts. Upon the magistrate devolved the right to investigate, pardon or condemn as suited the occasion, and, if need be, publicly hang the culprit to a tree with his own hands. Such was the law of to-day, that went hand in hand with the Man-of-war, the gun, the Bible, in a word with the Ramksee-wahs wherever they set foot for good or evil. And King George's rule brooked no rival ; it tolerated no other

substitute. Blood-revenge, therefore, had seen its last, like the labret through the lower lip, never to return. He, Kamalmuk, pinned his faith to the White Man, his inventions and his wealth. So he had done for years; so he persisted now, in his hour of trial. And he dared not take the law into his hands; he could not kill Neetuh.

Was he, at a first temptation, to throw up his ideals, his professions, and cast his lot against his inclination with a band of howling pagans in the wilderness! What would his white friends think of him, Beach and others at large, what would they think when they heard of the affair, when they learned that he had become a fiend of the dagger-knife, the slayer of witches springing from an ambush? They would laugh, and say, "He is naught but a d—— Siwash after all," and be sorry for him. They could not help it. Ridicule, ah! the worst castigation for his relapse into savagery. How could he thereafter look them straight in the face, as he used to? There would be only one door left open to him, that which leads to the hunting preserves, the fishing platform down the canyon, and the *ya-auk* for his share of eagle's down, paltry gifts from soiled hands, and such damnable nonsense among his dusky peers. No, he would not kill Neetuh, not at such a price!

If the sorcerer's guilt were questioned among his own kin, as would undoubtedly happen, the outcome might be disastrous on that score alone. Unseen avengers would wait for retaliation behind every tree along the trails. Else his slayer must pay down large sums as blood-money, the savings of many years, to a host of calculating relatives, who would impose their terms. Moreover, there would follow a long period of seclusion for him in the forests, until both hostile tribesmen and the white magistrate had forgotten his felony. No, the killing of Neetuh was

out of the question. Kamalmuk's best counsel was to shun a deed so incalculably ruinous, a deed that would inevitably bring about his downfall. He listened to the inner voice of wisdom, and ignored his wife's repeated prompting and the secret whisper of his conscience.

Days and nights as they passed brought no balm to Sunbeams' affliction, nor any clear solution to the problem of retribution in Kamalmuk's wavering mind. From the cold season of *mahdem* to the milder moon of *hawahlu*, when the rays of the sun drink up the snow, she cried every night and shed a stream of tears. Daily, at dawn, she repeated to her anguished husband her one supplication, "Kill him, kill Neetuh!"

Once, she added the words, "If you kill him my heart will be glad, the heart of a fond mother. He cursed my son; he took his life away. If you will not remember your duty as a father, then I must go myself and hunt for rabbits." She sharpened her hunting knife, muttering all the while, even in the presence of her relations, to shame her husband for his cowardice, "If you must nurse your grief at home like a woman, let me go and look for the long-eared ones!"

Neetuh passed through the cemetery, on his way home from Kitwinkul. He heard someone sobbing, a woman at a grave, crooning dolefully. Stopping a moment, he gazed at her. He recognized his niece Sunbeams, to his surprise. "Who is this," he wondered aloud, "who is this, crying alone in the open, when the land might ring everywhere with like lamentations for like deaths?" He went on his way, stooping under a heavy load of *ya-auk* gifts strapped on his shoulders.

Sunbeams a while after dried her tears, and followed a hidden lane back to her house. "Had you heard him taunting me in the graveyard," she said to Kamalmuk,

"you would at least know that our son's murderer had the impudence to return hither as though nothing had happened. Thereupon she threw her husband's double-barrelled gun upon his couch, and flung a bag of bullets at him, crying, "Go out and shoot the grouse!"

Lost in the maze of his conflicting thoughts, Kamalmuk stood at the grave of his sons, the next day. He noticed a man coming up from the village below and recognized head-chief Weegyat, Large-person, who passed on his way to Kitwinkul. The *ya-auk* was to reopen on the moon of *hawahlu*, of taboos, as soon as it appeared suspended in the blue vault ; and Weegyat, escorted by a messenger, had a mission to fulfil among the tribesmen of Kitwinkul and the Rabbit-people ; that is, to invite them to a great feast at Segyukla, a feast that would lift the pall of grief overshadowing the country. And who was the messenger but Neetuh, following Weegyat at a distance. The sorcerer was singing to himself, as he went, the *neeyendza* song which he had recently composed as a taunt—Kamalmuk, amazed beyond words, instantly remembered it :

"My heart throbs at the memory of times that are past . . . The little crab-apple tree has thrust its roots on the mount where dwell the mighty ; its limbs bend down under a weight which it cannot bear, the weight of the Sun, the Stars and the Rainbow. It has fallen before the high winds that would have swept its name to the four corners of the earth. The poor little crab-apple tree! O, my heart throbs at the memory of times that are past!"

When the song faded off, Kamalmuk again gazed for a moment at the fresh mound under which lay the body of his unfortunate son, and repeated distractedly the words of bitterness, "The poor little crab-apple tree! It has fallen before the high winds that would have swept its name to the four corners of the earth. O, my heart throbs

at the memory of times that are past!" Collecting his thoughts and heaving sighs that oppressed his bosom, he returned home, a new man, with a definite purpose in life. His countenance vividly lightened as he stepped over his threshold, and strange fires glared in his eyes. "Clean the kettle!" he bade his wife; "I must shoot game—the grouse, maybe—for a lark." And he went out with his gun, not to reappear for several days.

Revenge



SPELL kills as surely as an arrow from the archer's bow, when it is shot at the human body by a sorcerer and rides on his breath to its goal. Its mischief is twice certain if it be coupled with the deadly effect of a witch-box hidden in a fearful place. In the magical casket of a wizard usually enter trivial adjuncts from the limbs of the intended victim, hair, nails, ornaments and bits of tattered garments. Kamalmuk believed it all only too thoroughly, as he proceeded by stealth on the Kitwinkul trail, his soul writhing in agony. Neetuh's spell, cast over his son in public, afforded a clue to his real efforts, which were to get rid by mystic tools, slyly at night, of the human stumbling-block in his path. Had he not even removed—so the rumour went—his evil charms for greater potency from an ancient broken up grave on the hill-side to another in a cave, where the charred bones of a notorious medicine-man had lain for years? Nothing easier for him than to secure from the head of Bitten-wrists a single hair, or a thread from his clothes, and to place it among the gruesome relics of other crimes in his witch-box. How cruel the thought to a father, mourning with all his heart for his child, an innocent victim of hatred! How horrible!

In Kamalmuk's swollen veins now boiled a blood that was no longer the red blood of a sensible person whose beacon is common sense, but a mysterious fluid which changes a man beyond recognition, either transfiguring

him into the quivering embodiment of a thousand ancestors awakened from their eternal sleep, or into a wounded animal instinctively roused for a supreme retaliation before its life crumbles into the dust of ages.

He sat panting on a fallen tree, at the top of Windselneleetu, a high bluff above a prairie stretching afar under a mantle of snow.* Only two moons earlier had he camped at this very spot, while on his way to the *ya-auk* with his family. He could still see, jutting out of the white drift, the burnt remnants of two logs that had served for a fire at night, the fire watched over by his young sons. His loss struck him still more grievously than ever. The world for him now was empty, meaningless. Life had been spoilt for him, to the end of time. Wherever he looked, he saw naught but death and desolation. Above his head the gloomy sky, laden with ash-grey clouds and moaning under the breath of a cold northern wind ; under the gravel and the snow, in the grave-yard, the lifeless, frozen bodies of his sons, and somewhere beyond reach, on the Kitwinkul trail yonder, the surviving curse of his existence, the foul object of his hatred, the wizard that still thrived openly—since he now travelled as an official messenger—, the evil-doer unchastened, unrepentant. Kamalmuk cried aloud, he cried his soul to the sky, to the wind, to the snow-covered earth, to the mountain ranges, to the four corner-posts of the world ; he cried aloud as one near unto death for grief untold.

A voice journeyed thither on the wind that brushed the valley north and south. Its ring was familiar, and its tune, not unknown. The sorrowful father stopped crying, dried his tears, and listened, gasping for breath. He recognized it instantly. It was Neetuh's, in the distance ;

*Now Jasper Derrick's ranch, four miles south of Kitwinkul.

and the song was still the same, the accursed *neeyendza* of the feast house. Kamalmuk started to his feet. His eyes swept the slope. As he gazed eagerly, his hand groped for his musket, an old-fashioned flintlock, leaning near him against the fallen tree. But, at the touch of the cold metal, he remembered with a start that the twin barrels were loaded merely with powder and shot, for grouse or wild rabbits. He at once squatted down behind the tree and began to remove in haste the charge with the ram-rod, muttering, "I was only hunting for a grouse, and what should I meet but a buck!" Having replaced it with a full measure of powder mixed with shot and a ball from his pouch, he kneeled in ambush, and aimed straight for the human target now moving under a large pack midway up the steep foot-path.

The sorcerer slowly drew nigh, and the words of his taunting song clearly betrayed his constant thoughts: "He swooned at the chirping of Blue-jay, and screened his eyes before the great light that shone for him aloft. How restful must be his heart now that he slumbers in death! A slave was he who would be greater than I, who would hold up the sky-vault with his hands in my stead. Call him a *kha*, a slave."

A flash darted from the brow of the hill, along with the crisp report of a gun. Neetuh, fifty paces below, fell back in his tracks with a groan. A raven flew screaming through the tree tops. Then followed a silence, grim as death, and the low moaning of the wind in the pitch pines everywhere.

The sorcerer sat up, raised his head, whimpering as a man might in a nightmare, jerked off the band around his forehead that held the box of candlefish oil suspended on his back, and made a gallant effort to stand up and



scale the heights. "Who is it," he lamented, "who is it that shoots me down like a buck, who is it?"

At the sight of his assailant, skulking irresolute in the thicket, he burst into lugubrious wails, "Who is it. . . . Ah . . . ah, ah, ah—!" The echo "Ah—!" thrice leaped back, fading away, from the mountain passes. He staggered to one side and sank into the snow, while his attacker ran down past him along the trail to Kitwinkul, wild-eyed, terror-struck.

Neetuh gazed at Kamalmuk with helpless awe, when he approached, as he believed, for a last blow. But, as he saw him draw away in real flight downhill, he sadly, bitterly cried out, "Ah, ah—! Have I taken your uncle's life that you should snatch mine away? Have I killed one of your blood, that you should shoot me down like a dog? Ah—!"

Then he crawled to the nether end of a large windfall, away from the lane, beat down the snow in the gaping cavity, spread out his *wudzeeh* blanket, of caribou, and sat on it, despondently sighing, his back to the fan-like roots. His blood began to overflow his garments through an opening at the hip, and to drip like heavy drops of rain on the caribou hair. He felt the growing weight of loneliness. Once more he vented his distress to the wind, "Ah—! Ah, ah!" and a cold chill shook his limbs. His teeth clattered in his mouth. "Ah—! Ah, ah!" he cried out again, in growing terror. But the empty echoes alone responded to his alarm.

To shield himself against a fresh attack, which he feared might come, he drew out his knife, a small blade, ivory-like, shining and thin edged with wear and age, and he raised it in his hand, clinched for a last mortal combat. In his left hand he held the twin-headed bone talisman, which every sorcerer treasures in his bosom. The time

had come, so he felt compelled, to summon back his *awdzen* to him, his shadowy soul, that was disquietingly hovering about him, now above the roots of the dead tree, then as far as the tree tops aloft, and might be blown off on the breath of the northern wind beyond recovery.

Between trembling lips he hummed his spirit song, the song that proved an unfailing aid in critical hours of life : "My heart harbours a grief, the grief of a sorrowful man. It throbs at the memory of times that are past. When I look back, I see the mountains, my birth-place, the high ridges wherefrom descends my path. My heart is nearly broken, my heart is nearly lost!

"Robin-woman, my immortal friend of spirit-land, Robin-woman will cure me, will heal the wound in my breast, heal the wound in my loin, the wound that drips streams of blood, will lead my shade on her wings to the abode of the Sun. Robin-woman, my immortal friend! My heart faintly throbs, my heart is nearly broken, my heart is nearly lost. Robin-woman of my heart!"

Troublous Days



KAMALMUK meantime sped on his way, his bosom scorched by a tongue of flame. Fantastic thoughts darted through his brain, like lightnings in a forest peopled with monsters now awakened for a fatal chase. The gloom of night was thickening about him. And when at last he ran into Kitwinkul, the village-dwellers lay quiet in slumber under many snow-capped roofs.

Out of breath he entered his uncle's lodge and for a while stood without speaking, by the fire place. Then he addressed Weehah, Great-wind-of-the-air, who sat with a drooping head at the edge of his couch. "News for Weegyat of Segyukla," he declared, "urgent news! Summon him hither, I pray, that he may hear first of all, who is most concerned." Weehah awakened one of his nephews and despatched him with a message to the Fireweed lodge. "Let Weegyat be called at once," he musingly commanded; "he may not tarry in our town much longer. His mission is now accomplished ; his colleague Neetuh has departed homewards. They conveyed an invitation to us, Wolves and Ravens, to attend the funeral of their kinsman Sayems on the appearance of the *weelars* moon. And we have not yet decided whether to accept. O, in these troublous days, one knows not what to do!"

Weegyat had no sooner entered than Kamalmuk's confession burst forth, "I killed the grouse at Windzelneleetu!" The head-chief of Segyukla, dumb and motionless, grasped the real meaning of the utterance under its

sinister veil. His experienced mind leaped into the future. Here was a tragedy that would wreck tribal peace, perhaps entail speedy retaliation in blood. He shuddered at the first impact of passion, but rallied quickly, under stress. A partisan of peace, he must show nothing but prudence and discretion. He might otherwise have yielded to vindictive instincts, like most others in his place ; for Neetuh belonged to the tribe of which he was himself the head-chief, to the same Fireweed phratry. The news came to Weegyat like a blow. The loss of a man, a follower, through foul play, hurt him to his very bowels. True it is, on the other hand, that he had long entertained the warmest feelings for Kamalmuk, who was his own sister's step-son, and who had lived alongside of him in his village for many years.

He quietly enquired, "Is he dead, the unfortunate one?" Kamalmuk started, as if suddenly awakened. "He fell over ; then, sat up," was his reply ; "spoke to me, as I went by . . ." The chief of Segyukla quietly insisted, "If you really have killed him, be silent. Else, a word may betray you and imperil your life." Then, like a shadow, he disappeared into the night.

Great-wind-of-the-air, quivering with indignation, rebuked his nephew Kamalmuk. "Under whose authority did you spill his blood?" he questioned. "Did I, your uncle, summon you to kill him?" Kamalmuk bent his head for shame, while the old man fumed away, "Who are you, to take the law in your own hands? No longer my nephew. Too proud, you would not condescend to obey me, would not be one of us in our feasts, in our transactions. Yet, without our consent, you would plunge us into a quarrel of your own, would force us to pay dearly for your redemption ! A white man, this is what you are, what you want to be. Have your own way, if you must! Seek

the protection of the Ramkseewahs, of their king. O you fool, take yourself out of my presence and hide your imposture wherever you may!"

Smarting as if under a whip, Kamalmuk went out as he had entered, in the cold starless night. He journeyed miserably on the trail to Segyukla, where now dwelt his father Wuda-hayets, and the mother of his sons, Sunbeams, the unrelenting spoiler of his life.

It was after sunset the following day that Wuda-hayets heard heart-rending sobs outside his lodge, like those of lost souls in the clouds of night time. He sat up, alarmed, and listened. Someone knocked at the door, four times. He said to Weegyat's sister, his second wife, "A man is in trouble at our threshold."—"Who is there crying, ghost-like?" she queried. Kamalmuk answered, "Here am I, your step-son. Is my father asleep?" Dumbfounded, she unfastened the door and begged him to tell her the cause of his grief. "My father, is he not here," he enquired, gasping for anxiety, "that I may tell him the news forthwith, who first of all should be informed? I have killed Neetuh, killed him at Windzel-neleetu. . . ."

Wuda-hayets gave no reply, only laughed at his son's jest, and said, "What a dream I had, an incredible dream! My son shot a grouse, and, for no other reason, went into deep mourning for a year at Medzee-aden, clipped his hair short, and sprinkled ashes on his head as widows do. What a dream, a senseless dream!" And he laughed dryly, inquisitively. "Hun, hun!" he went on, "shoot a grouse in real earnest, how unlike him, my son! Who would believe it! Hun, hun, hun!"

"Father," reiterated Kamalmuk, "I shot Neetuh, who had shot a spell into my child, a deadly spell!" "You fool!" exclaimed Wuda-hayets, suddenly aroused; "did your grandfather order you to take a man's life?

Did I do it myself unawares, in my sleep, contrary to my life-long rule, 'Never kill, never kill, for your own life's sake!' O you fool, where must we flee, ere it is too late? Where must we hide our common shame?"

From his father's home Kamalmuk passed onwards to that of Sunbeams, on his errand of gloom. He entered it without warning, tossed the musket towards his wife's couch, and boasted darkly, "Dry your tears, woman! I have killed the grouse, killed it at your bidding. Laugh for joy and set the pot boiling!"

She laughed verily. Her breath came in short gasps, and her throat gurgled. He heard her plainly, in the dark. Yet, hers did not tingle like the laughter of glee. She giggled, sneering lightly, in cruel mockery—for she disbelieved him—, "Killed a grouse! how unlike Kamalmuk, Raven's-ear-lobe, who would not even kill a wren, lest other wrens should retaliate, and with their tiny beaks peck the eyes out of his orbits. Killed a grouse! How truly unlike the scion of the Kitwinkul Wolves!"

Before she could utter another insult, he flung swiftly the bag of bullets at her face, crying out, "Take back your seeds of Fireweed, the seeds of treason and infamy!" As he stepped out to return no more, a double-bladed knife grazed his head from behind, and flew past, to clink on the pebbles in the path, the very knife which Sunbeams had sharpened for the revenge of her sons upon their assassin.

The tidings of Neetuh's slaughter passed like a rippling wind from tongue to tongue. While the sorcerer's friends began their search for his body, the wild fires of an inbred passion for redress flared up in sundry quarters, with a fury that grew more virulent as the hours went on.

Not a few Fireweed families of Segyukla and abroad sided openly with the Neetuh faction. They despatched runners to other villages, whose mission was to enlist

sympathizers. Even so did the Ravens related to Kweenu of Kitwinkul, and Lutku-dzeeus, his wife's uncle, of the Torch-light-fishing tribe.

The natural abhorrence for murder and death, so overwhelming in a mob of natives, stirred unfathomed impulses to action with infectious rapidity. Men were no longer their ordinary selves, but impersonations of uncanny forces, of angry spirits of the wilderness ; women turned overnight into hellcats, whose breath hissed the fumes of revenge into their brothers' and their husbands' souls. The life-long suspicion, the secret felonies of Neetuh as a sorcerer passed out of sight, and his spell on the head of Bitten-wrists was forgotten in the turmoil. 'Life for life' is the tribal law, and all the rest submerges when passion blurs the issue.

Kamalmuk's relatives kept out of sight ; some, among the nearest to him, cautiously went into hiding. For, at the least opportunity, they knew that one of them might fall before the unseen hands of an avenger, and be found yawning for very death, his nose buried in the grass. Weehah sat within his house in Kitwinkul, nursing with dignity his old age and melancholy. So did his counsellor Malee, for like cause and like fear. Peril they must shun at all costs. Rashness had oft in the past invited tribal conflagrations ; they knew it only too well. Blind hatred as ever might run into unfortunate outbreaks, and obscure grudges might seek any opportune outlet, be it what it may.

Sunbeams fastened her front door with sinew, at the first inkling of hostility in Segyukla, and withdrew under the cover of dusk to Nee-ranyah's summer camp, across the river. When Neetuh's nephews turned their attention to the lodge of Wuda-hayets, they found it deserted. The occupants had departed for Kitwinkul, as soon as they grasped the gravity of their predicament. Weegyat's

sister had candidly warned Kamalmuk and his father. "Gather all your belongings and travel a long way," she had said. "Now we must part for a time. Neetuh's family dwells in this neighbourhood, so do most of his allies. You are only strangers, settled here as husbands from an allied tribe. Betake yourselves away for your own sake!' And the fugitives journeyed on the northward trail, Kamalmuk ahead, and his father and brother behind, lest they stumble together in the same ambush.

No one as yet could tell for sure whether Neetuh had survived the attempt on his life or had succumbed in the end. Kamalmuk heard him groaning, as he walked down the heights of Wendzel-neleetu, on the second day after their first encounter. Approaching, he called, "Neetuh, Neetuh . . . ?" with a gentle sorrowful voice. But the wounded man gave no response, and his groans ceased instantly. "Neetuh!" again cried Kamalmuk, "'tis not an enemy, but a friend now come to you, his heart overflowing with grief and repentance. Have no fear. . . . Tell me, are you still alive?" A voice came from the cavity at the roots of a large fallen tree, "Here am I, still alive, yet nearly dead. . . . Robin-woman, my immortal friend of spirit-land, Robin-woman will cure me, will heal my wound in my breast, heal the wound in my loin, the wound that drips streams of blood, will lead my shade on her wings to the abode of the Sun. Robin-woman, my immortal friend!"—"Uncle," said Kamalmuk, drawing nigh and anxiously gazing at him, "Robin-woman may still save your life. She ranks high amongst the spirits of wonderland, and her power far exceeds that of the greatest medicine-men. Pray that she may heal your wound for the sake of all. May she save your life!"

Shaken out of his torpor and the soothing caress of his dream, Neetuh stared back at his unwelcome visitor, and

murmured, "Here am I, still alive, yet nearly dead. . . . Come hither and shoot me once more, that my pain may end once for all. For death am I longing, death alone. . . ."

Neetuh still alive, two days after his presumed death! If rescued promptly, he might survive, and the fearful consequences of a deadly blow might still be averted. A mere assault, however grievous, would then be the only offence against him, against his kinsmen. And the atonement would consist in pelts and blankets—a trivial price. Peace once more would prevail for the common weal, and the trials of the early winter would vanish under the warm spring sun like the snow on the hillsides and the ice on the rivers and the ponds.

Hope surged forth in Kamalmuk's tired breast, and he rushed forward on the footpath, to procure at Kitwinkul the essentials for the recovery of his victim, food, fire and stout arms for his comfort and assistance.

At the far end of the bleak prairie, he spied four men searching the brush on both sides of the trail. He soon recognized them by their gait ; they were Neetuh's cousins, all young men : Good-speaker, Bush-tail-rat and Bear-swimming-among-the-ice-floes. A short distance behind followed four young women, their wives, with packs fastened to their shoulders. He hailed them, shouting, "Hasten to his rescue, before he starves to death. He is alive, at the roots of the large fallen tree below Windzel-neleetu." Then, lest they should start in pursuit, he turned back towards Segyukla, before they overtook him. His mere presence at this juncture might have provoked hostilities, and prudence was still imperative.

The rescuers, calling their cousin by his pet name, slowly scaled the bluff that dominates the prairie. "Larh-tao, Larh-tao," they repeated, "Raven-sitting-on-the-ice!" Receiving no answer, they retraced their steps from the

top, and clamoured, "Larh-tao, are you still alive? Has he lied to us, he whose life can hardly repay for yours? Answer our call, have no fear! Your cousins are we, searching nooks and crannies for you, with food and fire and medicines for your comfort."

At last they found him under the log, rolled in his caribou skin, half asleep and half dead, at the edge of a patch of blood-stained snow. Words of cheer they spoke to him, with touching affection. While the men examined the wound in his breast and at his hip, their wives built up a large fire to warm his body, and a smaller one to toast smoked salmon and boil water for root and bark healing potions. Too weak, he could not sit up unpropped ; and the only nourishment he partook of was a spoonful of sea-weed crushed under a knife and steeped in water. They fashioned a box-like seat for him, on which the four men would carry him in turn, suspended from the forehead and fastened to the shoulders. And they resumed their march laboriously down the valley.

Other search parties meanwhile journeyed hitherwards on the same road, notably that of his Segyukla nephews —White-breast-of-the-Bear, Frog-thumped-away, and Tsee-abah, their younger brother. Kamalmuk passed their camp at sunset, near Kasalarlawp, Gravel-on-the-rock-ledges, crying, "Make haste and help his rescuers, at the High-bluff above the prairie. Neetuh is alive, but ailing. Onward, friends!"

Enraged, White-breast-of-the-Bear stood on the alert, like a carnivorous animal, craving for Kamalmuk's blood. He was ready to follow his tracks, to chase him down, for instant retaliation. But Tsee-abah chided him. "Ay-ho!" exclaimed White-breast, "let us overtake him, as we would a lynx!" Tsee-abah countered, "Let us more wisely proceed to Neetuh's rescue, while

we may!"—"Uhkyaw, do you forget? Blood-revenge is our sacred duty," argued the one ; to which the other retorted, "Christians are we ; no longer pagans, no longer blood-thirsty savages. We have pledged ourselves to observe the new law, King George's law that now controls the whole land."—"Confound the law, the White Man's law!"—"How forgetful of you, how heedless! Have you so soon forgotten our promise, the promise we made only yesterday to Washburn, our brother-in-law—not to retaliate, not to tamper with the rule, but let the magistrate act for us, when the moment comes for redress?" Curbing their impulse, they broke up camp and started marching towards the High-bluff to the north.

On their way, they unexpectedly encountered Lasairh, Kamalmuk's cousin and the wife of the Eagle head-chief of Kitwanga. Tsee-abah, in a sudden relapse from wisdom to boldness, urged his brothers to lay their hands upon her. "She must pay the penalty!" he yelled, with a war whoop for a flourish. "For shame!" remonstrated Frog-thumped-away. "Have you not sworn to obey the new law?"—"Confound the new law!" chorussed his brothers, half-drunk with the vapours of revenge. "Then, if you must be renegades, be ready to take the consequences, prepare for war, a war between the Fireweeds, the Ravens and the Eagles, not to speak of the Wolves! War until every one bleeds and the creeks run red with the blood of our people!" The spectre of civil war sobered them. Their madness cooled. And once more they tramped the trail onwards.

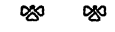
They soon descried their Kitwinkul relatives descending a slope, near Gravel-on-the-rock-ledges, and they cried out, "Is he still alive?"—"Yes, still alive," was the reply. White-breast-of-the-Bear enquired, "And likely to recover?"

Good-speaker answered, as he drew on, "His end is near. He may soon pass away—before the hour of *yuhs*."

Startled, Neetuh stared at the young men around him without recognizing them. When they laid him down on a carpet of moss, bare of snow, at the foot of a tall jack pine tree, they articulated their names to his ear one by one, touched his hands or his shoulders; and he finally nodded at them, with a sad, helpless smile, as one might for a last farewell.

His end had arrived. Before escaping into the dark, his mind brightened a moment; and he spoke his final words to the kinsmen affectionately stooping about his body; "Tell Weegyat not to mind me now," he whispered. "Think only of Sayems, . . . his funeral. Let the guests come, who were invited, . . . on the *weelars* moon . . ."

Relapsing into his dream of shadows, he hummed, "Here am I, still alive, yet nearly dead. . . . Robin-woman will cure me, will heal my wound . . ., will lead my soul on her wings to the abode of the Sun. Robin-woman my immortal friend of Spirit-land!"



He motioned for the object of his last wish, something. He could explain no longer, yet urgently he sought to speak. There was something he wanted to tell. They must understand. His limbs quivered, as if from a desperate strangulation. His hand pointed to a tree, then to the musket leaning against it. Good-speaker grasped the gun, and puzzled, held it before him. "Load it!" breathed the sorcerer. So, to suit his whim, the whim of a man at death's very door, they filled the empty chambers. He reached with his right hand under his breast, and as a

wizard alone knows how, caught an *awdzen* in hiding there, the shade of his murderer. With trembling hands he dropped it into the muzzle of the musket, and, assisted by his nephews, he fired the last shot in a lifetime. Away into space, beyond mortal reach, thus was blown Kamalmuk's soul by witchcraft, for its own mystic perdition in a future not far distant.

Neetuh fell back, breathed his last, and Robin-woman led his ghost on her wings to the abode of the setting sun, Robin-woman, his immortal friend.

Christians and Heathens



HILE Neetuh's rigid body lay in state at Segyukla, there arose around it a controversy, bitter and fathomless, that had marshalled the Tsimsyan nations into two opposing factions for a score of years.

Should the remains of the dead be cremated on a funeral pyre in the ancestral graveyard, according to an immemorial practice? or be buried underground, in the new style sanctioned by missionaries? Ought murder to provoke blood revenge? Ought the slayer to atone for his crime with his life? A large party clamoured fiercely, "The law is final, our own law: Neetuh's body must be cremated on a pyre; his death must be redeemed in blood!" To this, numerous dissenters opposed, "Pause and listen! A change has happened, the greatest change ever known to man. Cremation and blood-revenge are relics of the past, odious reversions to savagery. They can no longer prevail." Kamalmuk must be surrendered to constables, conveyed to gaol, and punished as suit the ordinances of civilized authority.

The debate swept like a hurricane along the beaten path: "For the sake of harmony, let us all turn Christians like one man! Let us become Ramkseewahs overnight, and be done with it for good! Let us vow our allegiance to King George!" Others argued, "How can nonsense ever reach such a pinnacle! Could we verily cease to be what we are best of all, 'real people' forever true to our own nature?"

Partisans frantically harangued the mob on both sides, in numbers almost evenly divided. Their quarrel belaboured public opinion by day, and inflamed it by night into real frenzy, whilst official mourners rent the air with their stipendiary lamentations in the Rainbow lodge of the Fireweeds. The fate of the people seemingly hung in the balance, for everlasting harm or benefit.

Confusion still persisted on the third day of Neetuh's death. The outcome kept fluttering beyond reach, like the mirage of island peaks on the glittering waters of the western sea. Yet, bitterness was fast ebbing out, the impact of passion had spent its force. Head-chief Weegyat deemed it opportune at last to convoke his leading advisors to a council in his quarters. He greeted them with the flattering words, "A great brightness appears wherever they walk, the heads of my tribe, a great brightness!" Then he expounded his views in a low, dispassionate voice :

"The days we live in are unfortunate, they are crucial. O, how I crave for happier times, the times when our ancestors thrived in the blissful paradise of Temlaham! How far have we degenerated since the Downfall! Not a year now runs its course unmarred by untoward events or, worse still, calamitous spells, plagues and social upheavals. Our numbers dwindle and our wealth fritters away. Still, is there anything we should invite into our existence more earnestly than peace, peace that breeds industry, abundance and happiness? peace with the white man and above all among ourselves?

"Peace was not only the command of the Sky Spirit to our forebears in the beginning, but also our pledge to the Rulers of the Ramkseewahs, those whose face is pale like peeled logs. Of such pledge is it not idle to remind the leaders of Segyukla? Not so many years since, barely

three times the fingers of one hand,* the six foremost chiefs of our town were placed under arrest, and led down to the Man-of-war in the narrows of Metla-katla, on the sea coast. We shall never forget the cause of our trials as long as we live. Our people had revolted against a new kind of usurpation, that was our reproach. White men for more than two years had ascended the Skeena in droves ; placer miners were they, heading on for the Omineca and the country of the Spring-people. Some of them camped in our village one night, while we were absent, fishing. Trespassers and damnable fools I call them! Of our houses and totem poles naught remained the next morning but smoking ashes and ruins. It matters little whether we should blame their malice or merely their negligence. Much of our wealth had vanished through their fault. We cursed them and swore not to tolerate any other of their race to traverse our territories. We kept our oath and blocked all navigation for a season. We were our own masters and the owners of our ancestral domains. The law was ours to enforce ; so we believed. Yet for this we were apprehended like criminals, we the chiefs, and conveyed to an unknown destination.

"To our wonder we beheld the Man-of-war at the Narrows, King George's mighty weapon, which belched forth lightning and thunder over our heads. We were overawed. A new power had crept unawares over our land. The truth dawned upon us. We had to give way ; so we were told. We promised to submit. No sooner had we clasped the hand extended to us as a token of peace than we were treated like real chiefs, feasted regally as becomes our standing, given presents to wipe off our disgrace and soothe our feelings. Once more our heads rose with pride and our hearts pulsed smoothly. We made

* 1872



KISPAYAKS VILLAGE—THE HIDING-PLACE
On the Upper Skeena

By A Y Jackson

a pledge, a pledge that binds our people in friendly loyalty, a memorable pledge to obey King George's law, to bring forth our disputes to his court, that he may adjudicate between us and our pale-faced neighbours. Ever since we have respected our agreement.

"I warn you, councillors, lest mischief might blur our memory. The present upheaval should not lead us astray. Peace must prevail. We are honour-bound not to spill blood, the blood of our kind. Kamalmuk's life rests beyond the scope of plain retaliation, as does that of the least of his kinsmen. The time for private feuds has lapsed forever. We have given our word once, we have given it past recantation. O friends, my heart craves for the blessings of Temlaham, the heart of a head-chief fondly devoted to the welfare of his tribe!"

With like moderation next spoke Lutku-dzeeus, an aged chief of the neighbouring Torch-light-fishing village, whose espousal of the adverse opinion resulted from the marriage of his sister to Neetuh and a congenial alliance between their households for generations :

"*Ayuway*, O me!" exclaimed he, whose name meant Light-bearer, heaving a deep sigh ; "I composed a song for my solace. . . . Downhearted am I, downhearted and lonesome. My old familiars fail me, as I still peregrinate through my homeland ; they have passed away. And I look vainly for their true successors. Have my Segyukla compatriots bleached their faces, that they might better ape the white man? Have they disowned our *narhnauks*, the spirits of nature, and the shades of our forebears? Have they all been baptized in water, and learnt as real Christians how to repent the sin of their birth?

"*Ayuway*, O me! Let us intone the song of withering changes : 'They mimic the gracefulness of salmon leaping over waterfalls onwards, yet perchance landing on dry

rock ledges alongside, to die long before they have attained their goal. They glitter likewise, and their opalescence is that of abalone pearls. Yet, they putrefy—*ayuiway*, O me!—They putrefy like the excrements of Tsingwauts in the burning sun.'

"My song is done, the tune of my song. My day is ended, the day of an old-fashioned person. My limbs waver as if from the fumes of intoxication. Did I hear him aright, the august chief whose warning jarred in my ear, whose advice endorses King George's law, who would no longer secure redress through retaliation? Have I heard him aright, whose name is Weegyat?

"Only six prisoners journeyed abroad, accepted foreign dictates, repudiated our forefathers and their time-honoured wisdom, only six Segyukla chiefs. Hanamuk figured not among them, yet must abide by their surrender ; we must likewise submit one and all, when our turn comes, we all tribesmen of Torch-light-fishing village, of the Hiding-place, of the Rabbit-people, and of the Mountain-pass of Kitwinkul. Only six prisoners, six Segyukla 'uncles' were they, who arrogated themselves the right to speak for all other chiefs, to vow our allegiance to the Man-of-war, though we never saw its thunder, never shared in the gifts that wiped off their disgrace. So propounds Weegyat, so would he have us concur alongside. Or, have I in my delusion warped his meaning? Should we bow our heads now—*ayuway*, O me!—, should we renounce our claims without compensation any? Have my Segyukla compatriots bleached their faces that they may better ape the Ramkseewahs? Have they learnt like Christians how to repent their entry into life—the sin of their birth?"

A pathetic embodiment of age and grief, he slowly resumed his seat. Gurhsan in his turn stood up, his hands

clasped together in the fashion of his pious Catholic relatives of Hagwelgate. For he proudly claimed as kinsmen the inland hunters whose kingdom was heaven since the coming of Beenee, the redeemer of a past generation, and he volunteered his views forthwith :

"A Gambler am I, a Gambler, because Gurhsan is my name, 'He who always gambles,' the foremost hereditary title in my lineage! I tossed the gambling sticks in my hands, meanwhile ascending upwards like the Sun at dawn, clearing with my feet the clouds amassed in my trail, clearing the clouds on both sides, as I went on pacing gloriously. This happened in a dream of the air on high. Do you grasp my meaning, O you unabashed dwellers of the dark, who sit on the mat opposite me? We are all striving for the same prize among ourselves, the only prize that matters, the prize that means prosperity and good-fortune in this hour of destiny. Do you hear me, fellow chiefs, pagans, catholics and protestants all? Do you hear the sound of my voice? In my dream we tossed the gambling sticks together from morn till dusk.

"I lost to him at first whose hands are magic-like. And his words rang out defiant, 'I win! The country is mine, mine to rule over, since it was the prize at stake on the mat. I win! Accursed be the white man, therefore, and shame upon him! Down with his law! For I am a pagan, my uncles' direct heir. Kamalmuk's life is mine to smother in retaliation. And out you go! Out of your hands, Gambler, pass the ivory sticks!'

"I lost again, lost to the clever juggler who stood next in line. He cried out triumphantly, 'I win! The stake falls to my lot. The land is now my own, the land of my forebears—truly far more than I can hold, far more than I care to pass on to my posterity. And I shall relinquish it to the hands of the newcomer, the

Ramkseewah, and surrender my ownership to him whose will has daunted me forever. Crime and retribution therefore are no longer my concern ; Kamalmuk is no longer my ward. What do I care about the morrow, I, a careless person, the serf of the white usurper, whom I acknowledge as my lord? I win! Out you go! Out of your hands the ivory markers!'

"Twice had I thus met with defeat, oh, the pang in my bosom, the sorrow of my heart! But I would not quit the mat. I tossed the sticks once more, tossed them in my hands right cleverly, and behold! I won at last. Victory was mine ; mine, the ancient forest preserves I loved so well. In my hands rested Kamalmuk's fate. I must make up my mind, the mind of a righteous man, of a Christian ; and I declared, 'God is the only ruler, whose divine prerogative is to save mortals or damn them in the realm beyond. To him all people are alike, people from the east or from the west. His kingdom is above, while ours stands on the banks of the Ksan. Let him judge the culprit, let him mete out Kamalmuk's penalty!

"A Gambler am I, tossing the markers from side to side, ascending upwards in a dream, and sweeping the clouds off my path, like the sun ; a Gambler, whose dream is vision-like, merging into daylight reality. A great brightness, in truth, has risen from the orient, a brightness that has opened the eyes of all the leaders of mankind and subdued a multitude of demons, the brightness that crowns the head of the Father of Heaven, the greatest of all spirits. To Him, and no other, homage! To Him must we surrender supreme authority, to him and his black-robed minister in our midst. For their knowledge is vast, overwhelming, the knowledge of our sins. And their influence is beneficient to their obedient children, yet

devastating to their enemies like the thunderbolts or the everlasting fires of hell."

The Catholic convert Gurhsan had not yet concluded when Wistis spiritedly snatched away the thread of controversy, protesting, "To Him alone, to almighty God ruling in the Sky, homage and praise! But let me warn you that we, Independent Churchmen of the Ksan, utterly dissociate ourselves from the Catholics, our upland neighbours and former enemies. Never shall we bow our heads before the Black-robe, the man with beads and crucifix, whom we have been taught to despise. We confess our sins to God, not to the priest. And alone shall we be saved on doomsday." He returned to his seat excitedly, and his eyes encountered those of Gurhsan for an emphatic profession of scorn and resentment.

The heathens meanwhile fretted at the assumed contempt of the Christian factions for the primordial beliefs still dear to many stout hearts. Saurum-larhae—First-in-the-Sky—shook his head and ominously voiced their grievance :

"Are you so indifferent to the fate of our dead brother Neetuh, whom we are now mourning for in the Fireweed lodge, that you will forsake him on the threshold? Is his shadow to be cast off, while you wrangle among yourself about souls, as if you held them all in your hands? Must you leave him behind, stranded on a ghostly shore, after you have shattered the log-bridge whereon the *awdzens* of our ancestors used to cross the river of tears after death? Or will you provide him with a canoe for his escape, lest he wander aimless amid the clouds or stumble through the cracks of earth into a strange fire underneath? O brothers, who would thus tamper with the pillars of the sky, O brothers so vain and cruel!" Sighing aloud, he turned his face to the wall, and intoned Neetuh's

spirit song, to revive his memory among his distracted tribesmen :

"My heart harbours a grief, the grief of a sorrowful man. It throbs at the memory of times that are past. When I look back, I see the mountains, my birth-place, the high ridges, wherefrom descends my path. My heart is nearly broken, my heart is nearly lost!

"Robin-woman, my immortal friend of spirit-land, will lead my shade on her wings to the abode of the Sun. My heart faintly throbs, my heart is nearly lost. Robin-woman of my heart!"

Deeply moved, head-chief Weegyat iterated the words once before fallen from his lips. "The days we live in are crucial, they are unfortunate. O, how do I crave for happier times, the times when our forebears thrived in the paradise of Temlaham. . . .!"

He rallied, dried his tears, and gazed at his councillors around him, whispering, "How truly strange we all seem to each other, how hostile! Our voices sound unfamiliar; the meaning of our words miscarries on its way. What a blight has come over us! Our ancients used the same language, agreed on the same truths, eagerly trooped around the same sign posts. Now, it is all different. Cross-purposes scatter our efforts to the winds. Truth hides underground. Wisdom is forever lost. Our former allies, our relatives even, can no longer reunite in one fold. Folly and ruin! The great Trickster of old, Traimsem himself, has reappeared on earth under a new disguise, to fool mankind as never before.

"Whom shall we trust in this era of puzzles?—The traditions, the *ada-orh*? Very well! Herein most of us concur. But the *ada-orh* delves only in the past, the remote past. It ignores the present and affords not the least guidance in our dealings with the White Man. Shall

we cast our lot with the newcomer instead, the newcomer whose teachings bewilder us, whose behaviour is openly at variance with his own professions? His God bids him : Curse not my name, lest your tongue wither in your throat, love your brother like yourself, covet not your neighbour's own, least of all his wife. And he nevertheless proffers oaths till his breath gives out, hates his kinsmen as if they were born enemies, and ravishes our wives and daughters under our very eyes. The wicked goes unchastened, nay, he parades his sins in the light of day. Whom shall we trust, I beg, in this world of riddles, of impudent lies?"

Like doubt never had belaboured the mind of Lutkudzeeus. A staunch heathen, he accepted no precept but those handed down in a straight line from above, no verdict but that of the *ya-auk* and the elders sitting in council. "*Ayuway*, O me!" he exclaimed in his wonted style ; "*ayuway*! our views are locked in an impasse. We plainly differ. And we blame our misfortune. But the White Man is the real cause of our dissensions. We welcomed him from the beginning, took him to our bosom, sought benefit and enlightenment from him. He offered us tools and other forms of wealth that improved our welfare to a degree ; he gave us the fire-water which produces trances and ecstasies. But at what price these favours! And how many deceptions have invaded our country with his wares, how many false promises!

"No sooner had the prayer-man of Hagwelgate preached of the redeemer *Zazee-kree* (Jesus Christ) than his rival appeared in our midst from the salt-water, produced the Scriptures and denounced his predecessor as an impostor, the disciple of a false god. Both enlisted converts to their cause, meanwhile discrediting our ways. I, for one, strongly demurred against their tactics. 'Let them agree among

themselves first,' I pleaded ; 'Truth is single, not twain.' But our nephews and nieces fell for either of the strangers, and not a few of their elders. What I dreaded has happened, alas! We have become divided among ourselves, divided in our counsels, in our lives ; worse still, even after death!

"When, later, the Man-of-war conveyed its thunders to the mouth of the Ksan, its mission further staggered us. It meant not to accredit the Scriptures, as we first suspected ; rather, to impose over us a rule of its own, the rule of King George or, as we have heard it called, the rule of the Government. And our minds were utterly at a loss. Who had invited these strangers to assume our leadership? Why so many laws for our use, when we still retained our own?

"Neither did the Bible-man of Metla-katla* welcome the arrival of King George. Appraised as he was of the errand, he secretly convoked us to a council at night, and said, 'Fools you may count yourselves, the greatest fools on earth, if you condescend to play in the newcomer's hand to-morrow. His plan is to frighten you with his bull-dogs, his big guns ; and then, to spring a trick on you. You need fear no harm. Raise your heads proudly, as becomes high chiefs! Show your metal, exact a compensation for your grievances.' We followed the advice, and rightly. But the power of the Man-of-war overwhelmed us nonetheless. It far surpassed the witchcraft of the Bible-man or the trader. We knew not whom to fear most and wondered at the inner trend of events. Good cause had we for caution, for distrust. For we spied deceit and trickery at every turn, and fabrications beyond measure.

"Let me remind you, fellow chiefs, that we are now assembled for a decision, which cannot be deferred much

* Duncan.

longer. Is Neetuh to be incinerated, or is he not, he that died a heathen at heart? Shall redress be refused his manes, murder stay unavenged, rancour and fear in consequence poison our existence till we breathe our last?"

Of all evils the most ruinous to a people is that of internal strife. Heathens and Christians now implicity felt it, and deplored the common burden of their past aberrations. With saddened hearts they longed for a settlement, a compromise, or whatever might achieve peace and safeguard personal vanities. What should they do but submit to the inevitable and seek a palliative in the teeth of foreign usurpation?

Sighs and moans at this moment seemed to rise out of the river. They slowly approached the council house, and paused outside the doorway. They could not be those of a mourner from the Fireweed lodge: official mourners never stray out singly. Yet, what else could the lament be? At times it sounded like a traditional dirge, solemn, sorrowful. Now it crept high and floated softly in the air, like the hooting of an owl; then it swooped down to a cavernous drone, ghastly, awe-inspiring as an omen from the spirit-world, an omen of approaching death on the wing of destiny. The councillors screened their surprise behind stolid countenances, but held their breaths. Here were dark premonitions. Weegyat apprehended that their verbal combat was drawing to an end. Seemingly impervious to the sinister visitation, he concluded:

"Thus has it come to pass, to our sorrow and humiliation. We have become mixed, in this home of ours, mixed in our ways, in our beliefs, mixed beyond recall. The Ramkseewah has come here to stay; he has given ample proof of his determination. We cannot dislodge him. Too late, my friends! We lack the means to defeat

the Man-of-war. Neither should most of us really care to revert to the forlorn wretchedness of savagery. Why not then surrender to plain evidence, honestly accept imperious necessity?

"Even in our blood, in our heart and mind, we have become mixed irrevocably. A foreign strain has entered the veins of many of us, of many more of our children and our grand-children. Why, was I not myself born while my mother sojourned at Fort St. James, in the country of our neighbours, the Spring-people? My father was a white man, a trader, a chief of the highest. I acknowledge my dual ancestry with pride. From it I derive my courage, my sagacity as a leader, my flair for pitfalls.

"I bid you, councillors, do not commit the folly of presuming that the Ksan is still as our forerunners saw it before the Downfall—blessed and heavenly. It is no longer pure; it is constantly changing. Mind you my word of parting! Even as the waters of the Segyukla merge with those of the main stream under our eyes, our ways are bound in the long run to blend with the newcomers. When foreign edicts are unavoidable, why not tolerate them, or, at least, let them take care of themselves? Our pledge to live in peace among ourselves, with our neighbours, still holds firm. The time for private feuds has lapsed for ever.

"Still, who knows! We may after all retain most of our customs, show respect to the spirits, placate the ghosts whenever they harrow us at night, and incinerate the dead as we please, heedless of missionaries. If the law debars us from striking back at the murderer or the witch, at least we may resort to the payment of damages in compensation, the gift of the white feather of the mountain eagle to soothe our feelings, and the dance of peace wherein we display sacred head-dresses and blow

handfulls of soft bird's down in sign of goodwill. Friends, Oh, how I crave for happier times, the times when our ancestors thrived in the blissful paradise of Temlaham!"

Filing one by one out of the lodge, the councillors beheld a person skulking in the dusk, a man, whose wails still rent the air and evoked dark presentiments. They recognized Tupesuh, once a man of standing, now a lost soul, a vagabond whose mind was befogged and oft haunted by hallucinations.

Aroused at their sight, he ran back to the river's edge, crying aloud, "Here they tramp along, the shadowy chiefs, the nameless spectres of doom! Leaders of men they call themselves, leaders of men! Yet, they never grasped the idiom of spirits, the language of birds which insinuates forebodings. Their ears are stopped with sand, and their eye-sockets are full to the brim, full of maggots. They hear naught, they see naught. They know not the present, know not the future. And still they call themselves Chiefs, who are nameless spectres whistling in the clouds!"

He paused, then ran down the gravel bar excitedly, and shook his rags as a chief the deer-hoofs on his dance *ambelan*. Hulululu—! He hooted four times, owl-like, ran past the totem poles, past the row of houses, and climbed the bluff behind, till he reached the tiny grave houses denting the sky-line at the top. Once more he cried out his prophetic warning :

"Hulululu—! You wonder whence I came, whither I go in my flight? I have risen from the hollow, O you fools, the hollow where man loses sleep and wakes night and day, from ghostland where Kweenurhs, the Owl, chatters for evil on pointed gables, Hulululu—

"She lost her way, Nauhl's sister, the wife of Wakyas, lost her way on the hill-side, wandered long after dark,

weeping in the shrubs, calling amid the trees, till the Owl responded, 'Hulululu—!' —'What is your name?' cried she, 'and the name of your child?'—'Hulululu—!' She dropped dead to the ground, Nauhl's sister, for answering the Owl, in the hills, long after dark, hulululu—!

"Said I, Kweenurhs, 'Outward I fly into the clouds, into the frosty expanse yonder. Beware, O petty chiefs on the mud bank below, beware the hooting of the Owl, the idiom of approaching death, hulululu—! until I cross the space to the shores again, the shores of the burning sky. . . .' "

The Strands Meet



THE remains of Neetuh blazed on a pyramid of spruce logs, after sunset the next day. Around the pyre, a mournful stillness ; and beyond, a borderland of shadows, heaving bosoms and suffering souls.

Four wanderers appeared in the flickering twilight across the river, bundles on their back and long staffs in their hand. Once conveyed hither in a canoe, they proceeded directly to the funeral pyre, cast dried food in the flames and shreds of garments by the handfuls. A pillar of smoke surged from these offerings to the sky, its scent soothing the restless soul of the murdered sorcerer aloft.

A tremor at the sight of the strangers ruffled the countenance of the Segyukla mourners, who squatted at the edge of bushes, witnessing the awesome event of cremation, thereby fulfilling a sacred duty to the departed ; a tremor of apprehension, and for valid cause : the staff-bearers belonged to the Wolf brotherhood, were virtual enemies from an estranged people—Kamalmuk's very cousins, indeed—sent out at great risk as delegates by Weehah of Kitwinkul, Great-wind-of-the-air. A felony, odious and unredeemed, marked their brow. Theirs was a fearful stain—the stain of human blood. Had there at this moment arisen a fit of passion among their astounded hosts, Kweenurhs might have hooted from the gables, and the path from the river's edge to the graveyard witnessed their last adventure among the living. But chance is like the wind that blows ; it veers about in its

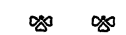
own puzzling way. The Owl did not greet them as they presently descended the narrow lane, unmolested. They seemed to be moving amid empty houses, in a lone village, deserted or stilled by death. Before starting off in the dug-out, they paused at Weegyat's door, and leaned against it an invitation stick inscribed with significant marks and surmounted by a feather from the tail of the mountain eagle.

Four Segyukla messengers in their turn proceeded, the next morning, to the camp of the Kitwinkul delegates on yonder shore. Their errand, tentative in itself, might foster further efforts at reconciliation. Near the delegates' shelter they dropped tanned moose hides, trade blankets, a few trinkets, and left smoked salmon between cedar boughs for the morning meal. All these as a gift from a hidden hand to an unseen recipient, in the haze of a mist at sunrise ; a gift with an implicit purport—ostensibly to acknowledge an invitation, yet, if so construed for the best, to condole with a father for the loss of his son through presumed witchcraft.

Yielding to Weegyat's advice, the members of the Neetuh faction finally inclined to conciliation. They agreed to accompany their tribesmen, who would proceed in a body to Kitwinkul and endeavour to come to terms without bloodshed. Retaliation, fraught with dangers, was not their only recourse after all. The culprit might redeem himself and wipe off his guilt with adequate compensation. And his wealthy relations were honour-bound to rally to his support.

A longing for peace trickled into tired hearts withal, a longing that grew sturdier from day to day, under the caress of warm breezes from the hearth of springtime. Misgivings gave way ; dark presentiments faded off as the snow melts under the rays of the sun. The Owl

of evil omens was lost sight of overnight. Perhaps had he flown back through space, flown back beyond the edge of the burning sky?



When the spring-salmon moon first scaled the heights, Neetuh's vindicators set their camp at the bend of the shallow stream that sweeps past Kitwinkul on its way to the Ksan. Cautiously they approached the town, as if contemplating an attack upon a fortress. They donned their regalia, humming all the while war chants of pristine Temlaham.

"*Haw haw midaw*!" clamoured the head-chief of Segyukla, from the edge of the river bank ; "Where is he, Weehah's nephew? Where is he, Raven's-ear-lobe, Kamalmuk, the outlaw that has thrown us all into deep mourning, *haw haw*?"

Neetuh's leading nephew, Kwawmats—Stump-where-on-sits-the-Eagle—intoned his late uncle's spirit song as a dirge,

"My heart harbours a grief, the grief of a sorrowful man. It throbs at the memory of times that are past. When I look back, I see the mountains, my birth-place, the high ridges wherefrom descends my path. My heart is nearly broken, my heart is nearly lost!"

Resuming his call, Weegyat cried out, "Where is Raven's-ear-lobe, that I may behold his face? To see him I have journeyed to the village of the Wolves and the Ravens, the wealthiest hereabouts. Where is he, his uncle, Great-wind-of-the-air, who sits at the rear of the house, radiant as the haliotis pearl ; who sits in the firmament like the sun, clearing the clouds away and bringing back joy and springtime?"

"Come down, O Sun!" entreated a multitude of voices; "come down from the shores of the sky!"

Kwawmats then passed from Neetuh's dirge to a livelier tune embodying a plea for redress, "Bring back, O Sun, bring back the warm winds and the green foliage, and the season when fish swim upstream in endless trains! The trout escort the salmon everywhere, the bright steelhead spawning up the rivers, and snatches up the roe buried in the sand. Likewise have we ascended the Kitwinkul stream. Likewise do we seek here a bounty, the bounty which is our due. No less do we crave for it than the trout for the roe. In it alone can we find atonement for a grave injury, *haw haw midaw*!"

The chorus rumbled, "*Haw haw*! Where is Weehah's nephew? O chief, throw your door wide open, let him come out of hiding, let your treasures spill from a careless hand! Pay for this, Oh, pay for this, the wilful outrage! Pay for this, *haw haw*—!"

Wails as lugubrious as those of spirits in the winter festivals—the harsh sound of cedar bugles—issued in response from the row of square houses wherein dwelt the Wolf clansmen, at the brow of the terrace. Yet, Weehah's door was not thrown open, Kamalmuk heeded not the summons, pressing, imperious though it sounded close at hand. Not so soon! Dignity precluded haste, and above all the towering pride of a haughty people. A speedy surrender would have meant disgrace, no less. Rather resort to armed resistance, if the Fireweed blundered into an assault, than meekly comply with unbearable injunctions.

"*Haw haw midaw*!" again clamoured Weegyat impatiently, after the sun had journeyed from east to west in the sky vault; "*haw haw*! Where is he, Weehah's nephew, the outlaw that has thrown us into deep mourning? Where is he, that he may dispel the sorrow that befogs



SPUKSHU OR PORT ESSINGTON,
A mission village, at the mouth of the Skeena

By A Y Jackson

our existence? Where is he, that we may at last be reconciled?"

The Fireweed claimants, after a long while, withdrew from the water's edge, to hide their dismay. Some of them, reclining at the edge of thickets, sought comfort in dirges long since coupled with all momentous events in life. "O people of Keemelay," they murmured, spiritless, "where are you all, that no one should respond to my call? Yet, you know me, you hear the sound of my voice . . .!" Others sighed despondently, in a reversion to racial memories, "How bitter my complaint, O Sun, Moon, Spirits that travel on high! Must there be no law in the land, must there be only an end, *algyah, algyah*!" And their recollections leaped backwards to remote ages, when Keemelay stood opposite Kunradal on the shores of the Ksan, when a deadly feud brought ruin and desolation everywhere, and calamities appalling.

A large owl alighted after sunset on Thunder-bird a totem pole standing in front of Weehah's lodge, and screeched inauspiciously at intervals till long after dark, to the hearing of all on both sides of the stream. Consternation spread in the night from the Fireweeds to the dwellings of their opponents, and forebodings fluttered about like plucked feathers in the wind, lest the worst trials of a lifetime would never end.

Unearthly sounds broke out in the head-chief's house, early the following day, after a restless night. They came from approaching spirits.

Weegyat repeated his summons, across the Kitwinkul Creek, "Where is Weehah's nephew? Where is he, who must pay for this, pay for this, the nameless stain!" This time, to prompt avail. The trap door swung open from

ounced forward, seized the tasseled cedar ring around is neck and tried their best to subdue him, to tame him ; hile the others danced together in circles, then singly, isplaying their possessions one by one, and piling them noulder high on the bank. The appropriate compensation or the murder of Neetuh were they boastfully tendering o his anxious young kinsmen on yonder shore, and to an xtent that far exceeded all expectation.

Weehah's liberality fully measured up to his repute. He still continued an outstanding leader, in spite of his dvanced age. No one could excel him in profusion. A claimant never went back from his doorstep empty-anded. Praise to him for his princely gifts! Praise to im, to his family, to all the denizens of the Mountain-passes!

Before withdrawing from the forefront, the Bear stretched his neck, rolled his eyes, seemingly to gaze at the Segyukla visitors, and sniffed at them inquisitively. But the Fireweeds remained dumb, contemplative. He failed to discern in their sullen countenance the least glimmer of approval. The offer must first be scrutinized in detail, ponderously valued, and either accepted or rejected in the end. Herein still prevailed an immemorial custom. And the participants on both sides were mere vehicles of the living past, the mouthpieces of obscure predecessors who somehow stubbornly survived and enthralled their posterity.

Puffs of eagle's down blew out of the Bear's nostrils and his moving jaws. His warm breath thus travelled in the air, scattering softly over the water a symbol of blissful peace.

Surrounded by the dancers, the monster disappeared in their midst. His party fell back step by step and reverted to the familiar boast of Great-wind-of-the-air :

"Who ever compared in excellence with me, who in the land ever came up to my elbow? . . . Like the rising sun I dispel darkness, flinging the clouds away. A good prince am I, a lavish host!"

The chant ended with the words, after the last of the Wolves had re-entered Weehah's lodge :

"O wanderers of the Smooth-waters, are you not afraid? How dared you venture on our domains? Ours is a prodigious chief, a great wizard! Monsters spring out of the ground under his hands and go forth in the light of day."

The nether world again yawned wide open. Shrill voices of supernatural beings, whistle-like, welcomed back the Bear into the realm of mystery underground. The trumpet-calls of monsters mingled with them awhile. These unearthly sounds came from cedar bugles blown by human initiates secretly impersonating spirits ; they rent the air and challenged the echoes of the valley, nay! the echoes of the supernatural world beyond. The fearful outcry then subsided, died down. As it still lingered, one could hear human sighs and heart-rending sobs such as engender every uncanny visitation in the world of the living.

In the grim stillness that followed, the Fireweeds regained the initiative. They crossed the stream for the first time since their arrival, and collected around the copper shield and the pyramids of valuables, for a silent appraisal at close quarters. Yahl, their Kitwinkul relative, approached them and conferred in whispers with his kinsman Weegyat. Soon all the Fireweeds flocked after them, and proceeded in the direction of Yahl's feast house, at the outskirts of the village. They held a council behind closed doors, pondered over the formal offer of compensation until the evening, and faced the issue with wavering minds. No wound, when it is sore and deep, is ever

ıled in a day. The least shock reopens it. The fires hate, which crime kindles, consume a sensitive soul no s. A breath fans them into scorching flames. Neetuh's atives still sulked by themselves, and their friends would ide faithfully by their side. Would the white man, sides, rest satisfied with a settlement that ignored his own thority? The future alone would tell.



The shades of night brought no comfort, no slumber,) the peace-makers, divided as they were into two opposing ımps. They conjured nightmarish in their wake, and nearthly terrors.

As the world turned over, at twilight, a horde of aerial ɔirits rustled forth. Spectres invaded the haunts of the ving. Native instincts, restrained by day, broke loose :om all moorings after dusk; they vented their whims slily, ı fantastic capers. There arose at intervals a strange attling of bones, behind the houses, in the graveyard; puzzling bustle, a spasmodic stamping of feet, as of ɔoys in flight, beyond the row of totem poles, amid the tacks of pelts and blankets; confused murmurs eluding ull grasp; and wails, and moans and sobs from the ɔushes. The dogs rambled about, fretful, turbulent; :hey snarled viciously, barked at one another, and howled ın high lugubrious tones, cascade-like, in the manner of benighted coyotes.

The Wolf and Raven elders gathered in small groups at the upper end of the village, and huddled in the ceremonial lodges around communal hearths, the embers of which were kept alive under a thin coat of ashes.

The Fireweeds likewise skulked like shadows in the background, ever alert in their quarters.

Blue and yellow streaks, at the hour of *laskeh*, tipped the northerly mountains, and began to skip along the crests. They soon leaped across the vault to the south-west, with a strip of sombre red. Still more vivid, they cut the firmament asunder with a broad evanescent band, rainbow-like. At times they shot through the tangled stems of the totem poles, boldly outlining the silhouette of birds with wings outspread aloft, or weird profiles of monsters, with round staring eyes and protruding tongues, more than ever outlandish in the diffused twilight. The scene, grandiose if gruesome, swarmed with significant hints and disturbing ill omens. The morrow sported its face behind thin veils which the eye of the aged and the wise could penetrate in the dark.

Time moved slowly from sunset to early dawn, without any untoward outbreak to mar its progress. The leaders on both sides kept watchful control of their moody subalterns. Two gun shots, before daybreak, startled them all into suspense, then into complete stillness. From snow-capped ridges the sun emerged, red as if out of a sea of blood. The light chased the phantoms, as it dispelled the nightmares. The people gazed at each other, felt reassured. Now that the crisis was over, they fell asleep on the floors of their houses. A night of imaginary horrors was ended for the comfort of all, young and old.

Midday was the moment appointed for the White Feather ceremonial. Both parties planned to meet for a final effort towards peace and reconciliation. Sanity at last held its own. Even the dissidents passively drifted

ıg, drifted towards the resumption of friendly inter-
rse, unable to resist the lure of good-fellowship.
Expectant, the Fireweeds donned their finery, all the
ile working themselves into exaltation with appro-
ıte chants, which they rehearsed in the privacy of Yahl's
lated quarters :

"I cannot find a balm for my grief," they murmured ;
scanned the earth for a healer that might capture the
ɔth within me, the moth of my sorrow, capture the moth
d blow it off, blow it out of sight, out of reach, the moth
my sorrow. I scanned the earth up and down, scanned
from end to end."

Two Wolf messengers thumped the ground outside with
eir staffs, then tapped it in rapid strokes as though it were
skin drum, thereby conveying Weehah's invitation to
sort to his house. The song of grief within instantly
ased, and gave way to whispers and ubiquitous rustling.
he hour had come, thrilling, momentous. Strife must
: stamped out, grievances be adjusted ; contenders must sit
ce to face, the Wolves at the rear of the lodge, the Fire-
'eeds nearer the entrance.

Neetuh's kinsmen struck a sacramental tune, the song
f the ancestor Hanamuk, and walked out of Yahl's house
ı the direction of Taram-laup, the graded precincts wherein
Veehah awaited their coming.

"The huge boulders rolling down the slopes frighten
ne," they sang on their way ; "they frighten me, they
lutch my heart. Fallen from Kweeyahl,* they escort
ne in my path ; the path of a lonesome traveller, of a
orrowful man."

Weegyat at its head, the Segyukla party entered Taram-
aup in a procession, heads drooping, faces haggard, and

* Stretching-rack (for green pelts), stars known under that name.

occupied the seats below the fire as despondently as would mourners at the ritual of incineration.

The singing maidens intoned Hanamuk's sacred song, as a greeting, a courtesy : "The Stars will lift you into the sky, and you shall walk in the tracks of the Sun."

Responded a muffled voice, amid the Fireweeds : "Robin-woman will cure me, will drive away my pain, my sorrow. I will again travel on the high trail, proceed to the abode of the Sun. Robin-woman will cure me, Robin-woman, my aerial friend."

A wild man excitedly jumped into the house, his limbs shaking, half bare, in a ragged ground-hog blanket. His bushy hair tangled up, he stared about him, in surprise, if not in fright. Behind him stood a hunter, tall and erect, bow and quiverful of arrows on his back, and an open skin pouch in his left hand. Last of all advanced their leader, wearing a buttoned blanket, deep blue, with red edges ; his head uncrowned but for a narrow band of twisted cedar bark ; and with a black stripe painted across his weird face.

Neetuh's foremost nephews all three of them, they dramatized their own titles, thus impersonating ancestors whose names, revived, dwelt within them awhile, deeply stirred their emotions and presided over their dance-like motions.

The wild man stepped forth, to the tune of his personal song: "Hither is tramping Man-of-the-Forest.[1] He is on his way from the head-waters, the backwoods afar." Overwhelmed, he sank to the ground in a heap, near the fire that blazed between the two opposite peace parties.

The hunter following him was Always-casting-stones.[2] He drew pebbles from his pouch with a deft hand, and

[1] Gyadem-gilhaolee.
[2] Kuhnelawp.

them into the fire, as if aiming at a moving object in t of him. His friends chanted his mystic song :

'What a pity! Why should I always seethe with , should I hunt down outlaws, should I forever shoot s at them in retaliation? What a pity, O what a owing necessity!"

Meanwhile he stamped the ground in slow cadence, ıg more stones into the flames and inflicted punishment ın unseen miscreants.

The blue-robed personage whose name was Stump-ɜreon-sits-the-Eagle,[1] slowly followed his mates in the ːground, and sat on his heels between them, his head t forward. His dignified sadness contrasted strangely h the dramatic intensity of their demeanour. The mory of a departed relative abode within him, darkened countenance. He mourned in his heart. Neetuh's ɜst nephew was he, forsooth, his prospective heir and ing embodiment withal.

A voice, anguished, pierced the screen of mysteries ıind the singing maidens.

"Who are they? Thoughtless ghosts snatching souls ay?" it queried to the accompaniment of shrill whistle sts. "Who are they? Raiders from the highways, iving to capture me? Fearful am I and deeply stirred. ho will pay my ransom, friend or relative, save me from ːir blows, the blows of raiders from the highways?"

The chorus intoned the Woodpecker song of Weehah t only response : "Child, my child, my poor little child!"

A man leaped out of the screen as a bird swoops down ɔm a tree. A woodpecker carved out of wood sat on s head, and a feathered garment dropped around his ɔdy as would out-stretched wings.

[1] Kwawmats.

"Child, my child, my poor little child!" he crooned in his turn, fondling his left arm as a babe, and pacing forward in bird-like gait.

The chorus commented, "A young woman once descended the mountain side, crying all the way, 'My child partakes only of ears, the ears of the dead, my child, the offspring of the timber wolves : Kamral-melmuk—He-partakes-only-of-ears."

Weehah's master of ceremony, standing at the rear of the fire, spoke in solemn terms :

"The event I will recount once happened on Krain Island near the sea.[1] A lover lost his life to a hunter, whose wife he had courted in secrecy. His lifeless body, thrown away like refuse, lay on the moss behind the smoke-lodges, till the offspring of the wolves ran out of their lairs, plucked his ears and tore them in play. The event in truth happened on Krain Island near the sea. Hark ye all!

"Mountain-woman appeared at the edge of the woods, sobbing aloud, 'My child, my poor little child!' She stood at the hunter's door, lamented, 'My child, the Wolf partakes only of ears, the ears of the dead left unburied to the face of the Sun.' The villagers took fright, thoughtless, impious people, our very ancestors on Krain Island, burnt the corpse of Kamalmuk, the first Kamalmuk long ago, burnt it to cinders on a pyre ; and departed in a body for the valleys among the hills."

"Child, my child!" again chanted Kamalmuk of Kitwinkul, the living bearer of the ancient name, softly waving his body, and stepping sideways towards the Fireweeds. "Famished is my poor little child, and never satisfied in his greed."

The chorus alternated, "She found a woodpecker one day, the maiden whose parents hunted eagles, gathered

[1] On which now stands the town of Prince Rupert.

feathers in bunches and feathers from the wings; veeladaw, the maiden in the hills."

"She wrapped it up in dry cradle moss," paraphrased ɛhah's spokesman, "and sheltered it under her breast. ad was it; yet, alive a while after, for the heat of her ɪng bosom, alive and gaping and hungry. Seweeladaw ve her pet minced food, and toasted salmon, on the palm her hand, and rocked it to the lullaby, 'Child, my child, ɔr little child!' She hid Woodpecker behind the rear ɛtition, fed it every day, till it grew larger, grew apace, ɛr craving for more salmon, more crab-apples, more ɛring roe on weeds from the salt sea."

Kamalmuk stood in front of the Fireweed party, near ɛ fire, facing Neetuh's relatives for the first time since had fallen from grace. Still nursing his left arm, he ɔeated, 'Child, my poor little child!' and extracted from der his elbow an eagle's tail feather, red from the ɪtre to the tip.

He raised the feather in his hand, the feather of peace, ɪt every one might behold, repeated, "Child, my poor tle child!" and planted it in the hair of Kwawmats, Stump-ɪereon-sits-the-Eagle, whose head still reclined for sorrow.

His voice breaking, Kamalmuk entreated Kwawmats ɪderly. "Brother," he prayed, "open your heart to me, ɛ heart of you! Here is my child, my poor little child, ɛ feather of reconciliation. I insert it between the ɾisted cedar band and the hair, insert it with my hands, sert it firmly that the high winds may not blow it off. ·other, here am I, with a broken heart, shedding tears ɾer our common loss. May I heal your wounds with ɛ feather, and wipe off your grief forever. Brother so ɜar, open your heart to me, the heart of you!"

He lingered in front of him awhile, sobbing and ɪivering. Then he drew out of his garments a white

wing feather of the eagle, and, stooping in the direction of Always-casting-stones, who sat to the right of Kwawmats, he placed it on his head. "Brother," he prayed, "hearken to my plea, you, ever bristling with indignation! Here is the feather of reconciliation. Shoot no more darts, inflict no longer punishment with a heavy hand. Appease your anger! Let peace be restored, friendship be mended, brother, O brother dear to me!"

Turning to Man-of-the-Forest, who squatted on the ground behind Kwawmats, Kamalmuk planted an eagle feather in his dishevelled hair, saying, "Brother, here is the feather of friendship! Let the nameless outrage be forgiven, be stamped out as though it never happened. I will atone for it, atone to the full. Behold the feather! Be consoled! Return to the headwaters, to your abode in the forests, your arms loaded with gifts. Brother from the far country, untamed brother of mine, brother dear to me!"

Moving back a few paces, Kamalmuk lifted his closed hand forward, then opened it, blew soft eagle's down in the air, right and left, and withdrew to the rear of the house as he had come, with swinging bird-like steps.

The Fireweed participants instantly shed their affected lethargy, and seethed one and all with exuberant emotion. Kamalmuk, the aggressor, the thief of their blood, had ventured out in their presence, uttered his plea, and presented as a symbol the feather of peace, of reconciliation. Their turn now it was to speak out, to accept the wager, or throw it back to his face, as well they might. Fearful moment, and fraught with dangers! Were they all of one mind among themselves? A single rash word now from the least of them, and who knows the extent of the disaster? All hearts on both sides, the bleeding hearts of men and

men, now bent on mutual embrace, would spring back tantly in the throes of a panic.

Under stress the Fireweeds began to hum a dirge : "I ınot find a balm for my grief. I scanned the earth for ıealer, a healer that might capture the moth."

The eagle feathers continued to adorn the head of the ee brothers in the foreground. And, as the crucial ɔment passed, the song gathered momentum :

"The huge boulders rolling down the slopes frighten :, they clutch my heart. Fallen from the Stars, they ort me in my path; the path of a lonesome traveller, a sorrowful man."

Spontaneously responsive, the singing maidens of their st repeated their courtesy : "The Stars will lift you into : sky, and you shall walk in the tracks of the Sun."

The clouds were scattering, and the eye already could ın broader avenues ahead. Peace would soon be ıieved, and mutual confidence, slowly built up from the ɔund, would again reunite the estranged Wolves and teweeds as of old. But days must lapse before the wounds : healed, days and nights consumed in rituals of atonement, transition from hate to amity, rituals wherein both ctions in turn would be the hosts and vie with the other goodwill and civility. Confidence, once shattered, the most diffident of all human sentiments ; it demurs stinctively, even after barriers are swept out of sight. ıd friendship, its mate, can be coaxed back into the ɔen only with studied care, unfailing devotion and the utual inclination of compatible hearts.

Kamalmuk once cleansed of his guilt, two of his others would proceed to the side of Neetuh's successor, wawmats, and stay with him as his temporary slaves, ıd him on repeated visits into their houses, prepare his ɔuch at night, and affectionately watch over him as one

does over a dear relative, in distress, in grievous ailment. He would fast meanwhile, four full days in all, fast and keep his eyes closed and tighten his lips in unbroken silence. For four days he would just "breathe", just pick up one by one his scattered thoughts, mend the broken strings of his heart, and soothe within him the scars that still scorched his loins. He would lend an ear to soft words, gentle songs, friendly entreaties, open his mind to enchanting proposals for the days to come and the years to follow, days and years of renewed prosperity and enduring happiness.

KAMALMUK

THIRD PART

A White Man



SPRINGTIME ascended the Skeena early that year, on the breath of exhilarating breezes from the western ocean. Thet harrowing winter of '87 passed—the wors winter for its epidemics within memory—, the snow vanished in the valley, the ice crumbled away and drifted on the dark swollen waters and the handful of isolated settlers at Hazelton sighed with relief. The Indians, for several months seething with unrest, had wandered off to the forests for the spring hunt ; and the peace emissaries of Segyukla had returned home from Kitwinkul, loaded with presents and gratified over the success of their reunion. Thus faded away the menace of insurrection and protracted feuds. The pack trains ere long would arrive from the Omenica ; the Haida canoes, manned by Tsimsyan crews, would depart for Port Essington, there to procure fresh supplies and news from the outside world ; and no trace would remain of the winter-long nightmare.

Clifford greeted Washburn with unusual cordiality when, one evening, he saw him land for the first time in months, on the beach near the Hudson's Bay Co.'s store. He at once pressed him for news about the whole affair ; he meant the Kitwinkul Jim affair! How had it blown

so tamely, without more bloodshed? Was it true after all the fuss, the Indians had settled the whole g quietly among themselves? that the Kitwinkul ɔle, bold outlaws that they were, had accepted a share he responsibility for Neetuh's murder and made re- ıtion to his crafty kinsmen? He could hardly credit it. l yet, he confessed, more common sense marks the lings of the natives among themselves than we believe. ɛre is not the faintest doubt of that. Outsiders who ve to abolish their ways, are dogmatic about them, the ssionaries, let us speak the truth, are not their true friends. e Indians should not be expected to live on their trap- ɛs the way our folk do on the streets of London. "What ɨdiculous notion! Even we ourselves here won't do and why should we, upon my word!"

All this outpouring by way of friendly greeting from ɛ Hudson's Bay Co.'s local manager, Clifford, to his com- triot Washburn, a free lance, sometimes a prospector in ɛ wilds, at other times an independent trader at large, d for the past years settled among the natives of Segyukla the interest of his barter, not to mention the support of s indolence through the labours of his casual mate, the dustrious Small-frogs, a niece of the murdered sorcerer eetuh.

Washburn did not respond in the least. He resented his llow-tradesman's flippancy. He had something to tell ıat caused him to demur, to knit his brows like a man ɔout to impart news of grave import. Clifford eyed im, while they walked up the beach together, wondering /hether he was not after all the bearer of some disquieting ıformation. One never knows what outbreaks to expect mong an agitated, resentful people.

After gulping down a tumblerful of Hudson Bay rum t the counter, his first in a long while, Washburn's spirits

revived. He opened the font of his new-found wisdom to his host. What the Indians down the river had done was all wrong, outrageously wrong from the start, he blurted out. Their rebellious actions could not pass unchallenged ; otherwise the fate of the settlement hung in the balance. The warning in his mouth sounded doubly ominous, since the denunciator heretofore had never displayed any particular devotion for the maintenance of law and order, or the promotion of King George's authority over his erring subjects in the wilderness. Ready for the worst, Clifford scanned his countenance and listened keenly and eagerly to his effusion.

But there was little but wind in Washburn's studied grievances, no thunder in his condemnation of the troublemakers. His censure of them rested on the mere grounds that they had tried Kamalmuk for murder in their own absurd way, and had finally absolved him upon the payment of pelts, and filthy blankets by the armful. What an indignity! Were they to be allowed to act as if the White Man's courts did not exist? Were His Majesty's officers to forget their duty to administer law and order? Washburn was now for the first time burning with an inner flame, that of the reformer. He felt within him a new sense of righteousness and racial superiority.

Clifford lost all interest in his vituperations long before they ran themselves out. He might have endured it a while longer from a full-fledged missionary ; but from a rascal like Washburn—damn it!—the thing was unbearable! He scented something tricky behind it all, some scheme that would presently reveal itself in the plain light, if he gave the fellow a little rope.

"Well, what do you intend to do about it?" he queried point-blank. Taken aback, Washburn stared at Clifford,

regained his assurance : "Go straight down to Vic-
ı; lay information against Kitwinkul Jim before the
ıourable A. E. B. Davie, Attorney-General, have him
in irons, and tried before a jury like any other murderer.
that enough?" Clifford exclaimed, "Great idea.
ı are a darn fine fellow, I must say! . . . When are
off?" Washburn sat up, paused for emphasis, and
ed at the trader between the eyes : "I see! you've got me.
en do I go down to Victoria? . . . My dear fellow,
the very first boat from Essington." A Haida canoe
s about to start down the river from Hazelton. A
opportunity! There was not a day to lose, if the law
s to assert itself at all, that is, before the snow fell and
Indians gathered in for more mischief.

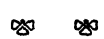
Coming close to Clifford, Washburn whispered, "Lend
the cash! Business has been poor, lately . . . Just
ıugh for the journey down. It will be all right!" A
h darted back from the corner of Clifford's eye. He
ıffly retorted—for he did not relish the joke—, "Not
ɔther damn shilling from me! There is still a little
ount under your name on the books here. Sorry to
nind you . . . again!" And he poured him another
nblerful of rum.

Unfortunately for his scheme, Washburn could not
ure further credit over the counter. He was known
ɛrywhere as a soldier of fortune, one of those free-booters
ıose stamping ground is the borderland of civilization,
adventurer in search of virgin fields, whose outstanding
ıievement in life is to spread the taints of the white
ın to the four corners of the earth. Shocked at the
ınt refusal, he professed the purest intentions for the com-
ɔn weal ; and, out of resentment, darkly hinted at
ifford's own lapses from the high path. The slur was
ıgracious. In a rough country like this, saints were

few indeed, if not altogether out of place. Sinners could afford to be candid, with a saving grace. Stripped of all sham, human nature was none the uglier for it, on the whole. Yet there were many gallant adventurers, fine men at bottom and true as steel! Clifford was no better than his fellows; yet he was no hypocrite. His mind was acute and unbiased. He scorned self-delusion and false pretence wherever he spied them ; and no less the assumption of superiority, the domineering conceit of white men, however low their extraction, when parading in the presence of a downtrodden people. What is more, he loathed, as a sound tradesman naturally would, wasting the company's hard cash upon a venture so downright unsound and mischievous.

"What do you expect to get out of it?" he bluntly queried. Washburn had not figured that out. He fumbled over it awkwardly. "Fishing in muddy waters, I'll bet my boots!" suggested his inquisitor, with a wink. He was not far from the mark. Under the threat of arrest, Jim would take to flight, would be chased far and wide. What a chance for a posse of special constables, under Government employ, constables chosen from the idlers of the Skeena, gay dogs all of them and fond of soft jobs. They might be stationed with ample supplies at Hazelton, for a year or more, while the outlaw kept out of reach, as he undoubtedly would. Washburn's claim for the front rank among them was a substantial one. He knew the country byways from long experience. Besides, he had taken the lead in the affair. "A fine job for P. Washburn, as a police sergeant!" Clifford ironically added. Washburn winced a bit, then saw no reason for an evasion and grinned, "By heck, why not?" They both laughed outright over

simple, unexpected confession. And Clifford con-
d, "It will be a fine job for you, the first decent job
ever had in your life. . . ."



The idea once conceived, nothing could deter Washburn
n his determination to teach the surly heathens a good
on. He raised the money. Nobody knew how. But
was rumoured that he had induced Gurhsan, the Catholic
vert accompanying him, to shell out, when he had made
lain that this meritorious action would greatly enhance
prestige of Christianity among his fellow-tribesmen.
He triumphantly waved a hand at Clifford, and
arted a few days after in the first dug-out bound for
coast, taking with him as Crown evidence the shot
racted from Neetuh's dead body, and his blood-stained
nket which of itself told a ghastly tale. "That scoundrel
l get us into a mess before the snow flies," deprecated
trader, standing on the shore. "The affair was settled.
it badly at that. Why reopen it? Why stir up the
uble all over again?"

Nor did the headstrong informer fail to arouse the
sky river-dwellers over the outcome of his mission at
ctoria. As he went by Segyukla, he insisted that the heads
Neetuh's family send back to Kamalmuk the presents
guardedly accepted in atonement. There was not a day
lose, if they were not to incur severe punishment for
eir revolt against King George's imperious will. He
shed a warning to the law-breakers of Kitwinkul and
eir confederates, when for a moment ashore at Kitwanga
rther below, a warning that would travel like the wind
id spread alarm far and wide. Then, he drifted down the
ver on his impressive errand, whereby he expected to

muster thunder and lightning, and capture a dictator's high prerogatives over a subdued people.

No trouble-maker ever proved more successful at the very first stage of his endeavour. The winter's excitement had died down as if by magic. The strain of a family feud had been forgotten. Enmity had dissolved in good-will, and harmony blossomed forth like the fresh flowers of springtime now breathing their sweet scent and carpeting the terraces with colour. But the report of this fresh cause for anxiety blew like a chill wind. Once more the villages were in turmoil. The stragglers took to the woods for safety. Rumours swarmed in the air as bats swoop down from the stars in the twilight. The Man-of-war would reappear, and this time force its way up the Skeena with its weapons of devastation. An army would march overland to the seat of Temlaham. Resistance would be useless. Surrender, speedy and final, would be the outcome. The compensation for Neetuh's slaying must instantly be refunded, the feud allowed to take care of itself, till the White Man imposed on the contestants his uncanny dispensations.

The members of Lulek's household, at Kitwanga, were prevailed upon as neutrals to perform an ungrateful task, that of returning to their former owners at Kitwinkul the gifts of peace, and notifying head-chief Weehah of the abortion of the new alliance. They fulfilled their duty with a wavering mind, and met with resistance in their efforts. Weehah indignantly refused to hearken, admonishing them to serve wiser counsels. As a last resort, the Kitwanga middlemen shed their burdens outside and skulked away with a guilty conscience. Panic infectiously spread in their trail like wildfire. Kamalmuk, now reunited with his wife Sunbeams at Kitwinkul, had a violent quarrel with her. Her face suddenly became hateful to

Was she not the cause of all the mischief, of his
ng? They vowed each other everlasting hate. And
latives chased her down the valley like a vicious dog.



ne bright summer night, while Sunbeams baled her
on the Segyukla sandbar, she spied shadows across
ver, shadows gliding along the water's edge. Shadows
: enemies, she surmised, of Kitwinkul raiders in ambush
:r. She ran to her house, snatched up a rifle, and from
dge of the low terrace fired twice in quick succession.
he knaves beware, while they still might.
tartled out of his sleep by the gunshots, the lunatic
:su yelled at the top of his lungs, in a neighbouring
He believed that an attempt had been made upon
fe, and raised his voice in lament, screeching at inter-
like an owl : "Hulululu! Said I, the Owl, 'Outward
into the clouds! Beware, rovers of the night, beware
iooting of the Owl, the signal of death, hulululu! . ."
)ugh the doorway he fired his old-fashioned pistol at
iuman silhouette skulking amid the houses. Ragweet
s neighbour—fell to the ground, stunned, but not seri-
/ hurt. In a frenzy the wounded man leaped up, en-
[his fish lodge, and bent upon instant retaliation re-
:d, muzzle-loader in hand. Through the wide chinks
[upesu's cabin, he emptied both barrels at a click.
eavy sound like a body striking the ground within,
outside a scurry of people in flight.
Ragweet's brother, recalled from his fishing station,
:ed into Segyukla the next day, his musket primed
:r his arm. In his footsteps followed chief Mawlahan,
prepared for the fray. A silence, heavy as lead,
ghed on the village, save for the swish of the rapids

below. They cautiously approached Tupesu's hut; but found it deserted. Entering it, they stood motionless for a while. Gurhsan appeared outside the doorway, singing a song of peace, his feather bag gaping in his hand. He called them out one by one: Harasuh, Mawlahan, Tupesu. And he blew the soft down of the eagle to their face, as they emerged from the cabin—two of them only. For Tupesu was dead, and his body, cold and stiff, lay under a blanket in the ashes of the fireplace, the body of the insane impersonator of the Owl, the Owl of the pointed gables.

❀ ❀ ❀

Meanwhile Clifford lost no time in his labours at Hazelton. The oncoming winter might well see the natives arrayed in a league against all strangers. The police might not arrive in time to quell an outbreak. He conceived the plan of erecting a bastion in front of the Company's store, astride the wagon road. The few unprotected pioneers of the neighbourhood would find shelter behind its walls of rough hewn logs, in the eventuality of an attack or a regular siege. For days the echoes at the Skeena River Forks gave back incessant blows from hammers and blows from axes in spirited hands.

The Company's manager proudly saw his stout pile rise from the ground like a mediaeval tower, imposing to all beholders and well nigh impregnable.[1]

When the winter set in, the residents prepared to enter it at a moment's notice, if their security should be in the least threatened.

Of Washburn and his police party, there were scanty tidings, loosely handed on, and by no means definite. The Skeena River Rebellion—such was its impressive

[1] The bastion stood empty for a few years.

tag on magisterial lips—had to be suppressed. Authori must show its metal. But the moment had not com not yet. Departmental heads at Victoria were not a agreed as to the time. "When" was a moot point und consideration. Opinions differed, as ponderous opinio ever will. Officials never rush, least of all when urgen knocks at their door. It is of their nature to temporiz And nature is sacred. The cost of the expedition, punitiv or otherwise, must be figured out to the last dot, also i exact results. The Indian population of the Skeer must be estimated, the difficulties of navigating the riv duly appreciated. An appropriation must be voted b Parliament in session—it now was in recess—and sundr formalities, arranged in serial numbers, must be dispose of to pave the way, each in its turn, according to schedu and routine. And what of procrastination and unavoidab delays due to civil service vacations and other leaves c absence!

The summer passed without material progress. Th autumn burnished the leaves and blew them off one by or with serene compulsion. Meanwhile, in the words of th official reports printed under the authority of her Majest Queen Victoria, all was quiet in the outlying settlement c the Skeena to the far north.

Washburn, now a full-fledged member of the polic force in the quality of 'special', became a familiar, colourfu figure, in and out of the scattered administrative office To fill the time, he told great yarns of the north, hair-raisin yarns some of them, in which he himself unavoidabl occupied the forefront.

And the winter crept in imperceptibly.

The scheme of subduing the Skeena River rebels receive a jolt in Parliament. But not irretrievably. A back bencher opposed draining the Treasury for the privat

benefit of remote adventurers. What business had the white people in that ungodly country? Why not summon them to pull up the stakes and shift to other parts—that is, naturally, if they were not all exterminated first. Washburn fretted on his bench : his job hung in the balance. It was not yet safely landed after all. The uncertainty reawakened in him a craving for the trails long familiar to him, the trails that ever wind their coils mysteriously around the foothills, down the valleys, through the dark forests ; the trails that compel a born nomad like him to tramp along to an end never in sight, never within human grasp. One day, in sheer disgust, he made up his mind to migrate with the sun to the north, his true home. But his lack of independent resources handicapped him. When he had almost given up hope, at last, gratifying news burst upon him. It was in the season when the leaves unfold their lobes, the dogtooth violets stud the grass with their dainty golden tendrils, and the wild gooseberry bushes intone their songs of purple glory at the frontier of the evergreen forests. News of an Order-in-Council *re* Skeena River patrol,[1] shot a thrill down his spine, travelled abroad, along the coast, across the gaping mouth of inlets, and over snow-capped mountains to the last settlements in the land. Northwards ho!

The winter of '88 on the Skeena proved the quietest ever known. There occurred no cause whatever for the Hazelton colonists to resort to their bastion. The Indians had mysteriously disappeared. Clifford sheepishly endured unfair punishment for his zeal. Wherever he showed his face he was greeted with shafts of broad humour—invariably identical, from the same wiseacres. And his

[1] In the Spring of 1888.

tower became Clifford's Folly, to the merriment of his compatriots.

For a Ksan hunter to dwell on his game preserves by himself or with his family was the norm of existence ; but only for a part of the year. The fugitives sojourned in their forest haunts far beyond their liking or their convenience. Still there were no signs of the Man-of-war, therefore no flagging in their circumspection. They tired in the end of the dreary unbroken sequence of moon after moon, from the early summer to the end of the following winter. And they could not help resuming their seasonal migrations, when the spring conjured the annual spell that itched in their veins. Not a few families trekked northwards, as was their wont, in the melting snows of *kwawyem*—springtime ; northwards along the Grease Trail, past the Cranberry river, to the estuary of the Nass near the sea-coast. The candlefish season had arrived wherein fluid grease is extracted in large quantities from the tiny *ulaken* that spawn in vast swarms along the banks.

It was Kamalmuk's father, while curing his supply at Fishery Bay on the Nass, who heard the staggering report that Big Guns were booming below Krain Island, bound on their way to blast the slayer of Neetuh. He despatched two of his nephews, swift runners, to Kitwinkul forthwith, bearing word to Kamalmuk, "King George now reaches out for you. Beware his long arms, his guns crawling up the Ksan like Tsenawsu, the supernatural Caterpillar!"

Two moons before the punitive expedition actually entered the river, Kamalmuk knew of its approach. Accompanied by his young friends Kamayæm and Peter John,[1] he started out for the headwaters of the Nass and the lakes of Medzee-aden, once conquered from the upland

[1] Kamayæm or Charles Mark, of Gitsegyukla, and Peter John, of Hazelton. Both died of lung trouble in 1924 and 1925.

Tsetsaut by his father's ancestors—the safest hiding place for him under the sun. There he might stay in security for years, beyond the reach of foreign law ; his felony should fade from the memory of the world. Then he could safely return to the Ksan. A penalty mild enough for a child of the forest, who had well nigh forfeited his life! Another in his place might have trodden lightly the trail to freedom in exile. Yet Kamalmuk stooped under the weight of his shame. His heart was broken, the heart of a proud, sensitive man. He must waste the best years of his existence in the squalor of a hut, far away in the backwoods, like the most obscure of his tribesmen. A fugitive was he, nursing a heavy conscience, yet no criminal at heart. What a sorry predicament for a young ambitious Indian of noble birth! It was the irony of fate that he should become an outlaw, he the White Man's confessed friend, the supporter of King George's rule among his people, the rule to which he had pledged his faith for a lifetime.

At Sea



'MISTER BEACH' was Kamalmuk's chosen friend, the employer whom he vaingloriously called 'My Boss', in whom he admired the traits that characterize the white superman at his best : bold and venturesome, munitioned to his finger tips, brimful of mirth and profanity, infinitely crafty, and, if at times disappointing, on the whole dependable. What, in brief, appealed to the Indian as a live paradox, a bewitching incarnation of might, seduction and futility, wherein cohabited every precious sin ever known to humanity. It is no longer remembered what business or duty dispatched Beach year after year on the endless trails from the Fraser to the Stikine in the far north. Whether he was Gold Commissioner, or itinerant magistrate, or simply a nondescript adventurer of frontier days, prospecting the placer beds of the Caribou and the Omineca that yielded gold nuggets in plenty or disillusion beyond measure, nobody now recalls.

Whatever his capacity, he betook himself to Segyukla one bright May day, escorted by two special constables from Hazelton. His definite purpose was to approach Fanny, the young woman whose name at home was Sunbeams, and through her induce Kitwinkul Jim to surrender to the Law.

He succeeded in finding her in her seclusion, after searching patiently and insisting that his professed friendship for her husband Jim—otherwise Kamalmuk—should attest the loyalty of his intentions. Moreover, he was prompted

by his interest to him who now underwent the worst ordeal possible to man—the privation of his honour and freedom ; no less than to her, who could not keep in the long run from drifting into the whirlpool of his disgrace. His influence with the authorities abroad could not be doubted, since he himself acted as their representative. He might save Kamalmuk's life, if only she consented to listen, and restore him to his kinsmen, who now was an outcast. His fate rested in her hands, the hands of a humane young woman of the Ksan, his mate of former days, the mother of his children.

She yielded to his plea that she should lend an ear, uncertain as she felt over the outcome. For she was a good woman at heart, whose only fault—if fault it be after all—was her determination to abide by the one rule taught her in childhood, the rule descended in a straight line from her ancestors in Skyland. She appeared before the officers of the law, a timid creature. Her eye glittered searchingly, from the edge of the bush where she stood, behind Nee-ranyah's smoke lodge. At the least false step on their part she would have glanced off into the shrubs as fleetly as a deer which has paused to stare a moment at the hunter in ambush. There was nothing for her to fear from Mr. Beach or the constables behind him. She felt it. While he stood at a reassuring distance, he looked at her gently, coaxingly. He did not open the conversation—at first. For he instinctively knew the ways of native thought. Intentions were more potently expressed without words. The face, the eyes, one's breath, the hands, the whole body bespoke their inner meaning. Words would only befog the elemental truth otherwise as clear as the morning light. Words anyhow were the great Trickster's own devilish invention—snares in very truth. They served the cheat by preference. In

crucial moments, they proved disturbing, superfluous. He quietly smiled at her, then extended an open palm on which glistened an American silver dollar. She relaxed, and shyly returned the smile.

"Fanny!" he greeted her with courtesy, as he sat down on the ground. His two companions sat likewise. Curiosity now softened the fixity of her expression. In various ways he made his mind known to her. He mustered some Gitksan words; she understood some English. At a pinch they could resort to sign language and, maybe, Chinook jargon. She quickly grasped the trend of his errand. "Good man—*'amaagyet*!" she archly acknowledged, nodding at him. And he reciprocated, "Good woman, *'am*, *'am*!" In jest he attempted the familiar love song, "*Hayawahl-rawde*. . . . Oh, my heart! How lonesome I am. . . ." They all laughed, even the other Indians sitting out of sight within the lodge. He displayed the American coin once more, to which he added several others, that clinked alluringly in his hand. Would she accept them? Why not? She did without hesitation.

Now, to come to the point. She squatted down too and hearkened, confident and open minded.

Kamalmuk had taken to flight with the intention never to return, Mr. Beach fully believed. What a disappointment! A good man, and so loyal! A real loss to his employer, to his friends, to his relatives, to everybody! And he was guilty of no crime. How deplorable his misfortune. Better advised, he would not have run away, would not have made his own destiny that of an outcast sought by the law night and day, playing a lone hand by himself, living in constant fear of betrayal and capture.

Kamalmuk indeed could not be blamed for Neetuh's death, in Sunbeams' own estimation. He had punished a sorcerer for witchcraft—a righteous deed. That would



THE UPPER SKEENA,
Near the site of Temlaham—the Good-land-of-yore

By Edwin H. Holgate

stand to his credit forever! He had erred, true enough, but only in his ruinous inconsistency. These things were now in the past. The thought saddened her, alas! She sighed and faintly concurred in Mr. Beach's opinion that his flight would not rid him of any of his troubles. To flee is to own defeat. The arm of the White Man's Law was long, if slow moving ; its clutch was almighty. How could he expect to escape it?

Sunbeams tried to puzzle out how long King George would seek for Kamalmuk. Beach answered unhesitatingly, "Forever, to the end of time! The Law never gives up, never flags on its way." Dumbfounded she was, and deeply upset. Why should King George, if he were as painted—a humane prince—be so hard on a fugitive, so merciless for a Gitksan peacefully abiding within the inviolate frontiers of his ancestral domains? "What would happen to Kamalmuk if captured? Hang from a tree at the end of a rope, like a dog?" she queried. Beach protested. King George was the true father of all in his kingdom. He wished no harm to the least of his subjects. But, law and order must prevail. The wicked must be held in check. Killing a human being was wrong, grievously wrong. Yet, not invariably. Mind the exceptions. A man may shoot down a foul aggressor, and be right after all. She knew it. Why insist? The King understood it too ; likewise his law courts. Kamalmuk was not a true murderer, nay! a devoted father shielding his family against the presumed evil-doer. No need for him to harbour a guilty conscience, no need to entertain the least fear, no need to hide outside the pale of mankind. Only, he must appear in the Law Court, give an account of his grievances, of his trials, in a word, exculpate himself. And the magistrate would absolve him, wipe off the stain of human blood on his hands, and grant him his freedom,

the birthright of every law-abiding person under the sun. Such was the new manner, the White Man's *kawagyanee*, his way of tendering the white eagle feather that brings back peace and friendship.

Reassured, Sunbeams nodded in assent. Kamalmuk should surrender, go to gaol in order to regain his freedom. The sooner the better for him.

Absurd though it sounded, she believed it to be the White Man's way. "Where is he hiding?" enquired Beach, coming to the point. On her guard again, scenting a trap, she tightened her lips. Never would she betray a family secret to a foreigner. Her breed was not that of traitors. But his ignorance was a feint ; he had previously secured definite knowledge. He merely wanted to impress her, to startle her with the range of his insight. He pointed his finger at her with a knowing smile, as if to say, "See I can read your very thoughts!" She was puzzled, unable to understand. He resumed, "I know! To King George nothing is hidden. His wisdom embraces the whole land. Jim is now hunting the bear on the Nass, above Grease Harbour, at Gihltin." She stooped forward, to hide her embarrassment. "*Ha'in*, no! not quite, nearly so!" she corrected, adding, "*Hillin*, where one longs for returning home ; that's where he stays, on his father's territories."

The ground cleared for conclusions, Beach and his men stood up and stretched their limbs, about to take their leave. She scanned their countenances. Was that all? What were their intentions? Go to the upper Nass themselves and communicate with Kamalmuk? How could they, white men, who knew not the tangle of elusive trails in the fast wilderness?

Silver coins in numbers again jingled in the White Man's pockets. To Sunbeams' eyes, he glittered like wealth

and generosity personified. She spied another chance for her own enrichment. He drew out a handful of dollars, for her to behold. She gasped with mingled wonder and cupidity.

Would she not herself proceed to Hillin? he inquired. Would she not impart to her husband the urgent advice of his best friend, advice which in all decency should not be withheld much longer? She recoiled at the demand, and turned her face sideways to conceal her astonishment. Her hands twisted nervously. Mr. Beach comforted her with the assurance that no one more fittingly than herself could render him this invaluable service. She vaguely assented, yet demurred. He threw the weight of his coveted silver bounty into the scales, dropping the bright dollars one by one on to her palms with appropriate emphasis—a glittering handful of them. She regained her composure. She assented to the proposal. Moreover, she would start on the Grease Trail this very day, and resolutely intrude upon Kamalmuk in his privacy.

Beach warned his constables to expedite their preparations, since they must at once respond to the call of duty. The stage was set for their entrance. She spied developments and waited for an explanation. "Why, yes!" said Mr. Beach, they must accompany you, must confirm the truth to Jim, speak in my stead for King George" In an instant she threw down the clinking metal and wiped out the agreement with a gesture of the hand. The proposal was rejected. How could she be expected to guide suspicious intruders to Kamalmuk's very hiding place? It smacked of treason. "He will keep out of sight if he sees me with them," she declared, "I could not see him, could not speak to him, induce him to come back. . . . Afraid of their guns, afraid of King George. . . ." And she pointed to the

weapons hanging across their shoulders or bulging out at their belts.

Other tactics must be attempted. Very deliberately, Beach pulled a sheet of paper out of his kit, knelt down, scribbled a message which, delivered to Kamalmuk, would answer his purpose. The White Man's hieroglyphs of themselves possessed mystic attributes. Then he handed it over to Fanny, with her stipend handsomely enlarged.

Let her go forth alone, conveying the written words to her husband, words of wisdom and friendly counsel! She chuckled over the silver pile, and pledged her faith that ere the evening she would speed on her way to far off Hillin on the Nass.

Tsa'ols—Mask-snatcher—was baling her husband's canoe, before sunrise in the early summer. A soft melody from the river bank above caught her ear. She hearkened and mused over it; for the lodges of Kitwanga thereabouts were deserted. The Ksan population at this season was scattered far and wide, the larger part labouring for wages at the fish canneries down the sea-coast. Plaintive though manly, the voice sounded not unfamiliar. Yet, she could not name the singer, a stranger in the village, she surmised from his northern accent.

"*Hay, hawmiday*! They left me alone," the voice sang, "all alone behind, the forgetful ones who went on their way. Like an orphan am I—poor, lonesome, without friends, without relatives, *hay, hawmiday*! . . ."

She dropped her carved baler and stepped on to the gravel beach. There she listened again to the lament:

"Oh, how wretchedly they treated me! Young and old went on their way alone, forsaking me, their kinsman,

their bosom friend. They abandoned me, empty-handed as I was, deprived of a living, anguished, forlorn, *hawmiday*!"

Her mind now made up, she swiftly clambered up the embankment. A man was slowly coming down the trail. She stepped aside, and drooped her head sharply, pretending not to recognize him. He passed by without giving her a glance. "So weak are my limbs," he hummed to the same tune, "so weak, that I may fall by the trail, *hadzaw*! My eyes can see no longer, cannot see my friends, cannot perceive my foes. I hit the trees as I walk, mistaking them for shadows. . . ."

Entering the house where her husband Earthquake was sleeping, she excitedly announced, "Kamalmuk has returned from Hillin, Kamalmuk is here!" Earthquake at once sat up on his couch and gazed at her fixedly, pondering over the news.

A moment later a man coughed, who stood outside, close to the door. Invited to enter, he complied—Kamalmuk in person, upright, of imposing stature, a pistol at his belt and a musket strapped to his shoulder. Earthquake and Kamalmuk shook hands like white men, both being of the younger generation and congenial companions from the days of their youth. The newcomer turned to Tsa'ols, his friend's wife, who skulked away in the background. Was she not Gurhsan's daughter, and a niece of the unfortunate Neetuh, in the presence of a spoiler of life, the life of her kinsman? He ignored her embarrassment, and, accosting her, also shook hands with her warmly as with a friend after a long separation.

"I was longing for you both," he muttered with a sob. Suppressing his emotion, he said, "You lived in my thoughts, days and moons without ceasing. In my solitude, I was far from happy. We no longer resemble our surly old uncles who can do without companions,

who can spend a lifetime alone on their trap lines. No, we cannot dispense with fellowship any longer. O, I was lonesome for you, my friends!" He approached Earthquake, and spoke to him almost in whispers :

"You did not expect to see me any more. I read it in your eyes. So astounded are you, that you can hardly muster a word. It was a wrong thing I did, O my friend, I confess it, a wrong thing. To save my life I had to take to flight, to go into hiding, never to show my face again, the face of a shameful man. Oh, the pain in my breast! Never might I return, never behold Kitwinkul with my eyes, never revisit Kitwanga again ; unless, perhaps, in the evening of my life, when all the people had forgotten my name, forgotten me beyond recall. I might not come back, not till the end. My abode would be Medzee-aden, the domain once conquered from our enemies, the Tset-saut ; my companions, the wild beasts of the forests, the trees along the trail ; my lone escort, the shadow at my feet. . . . I might never return, so I fully believed.

"Yet, here am I on the Ksan once more, four moons after, only four moons. How puzzling is our life after all! It is all different now. . . . The world moves on, changes beyond recognition. We can hardly keep up with the times."

Tsa'ols now felt sorry for the outlaw. Womanly compassion softened her heart, curbed the bias which personal injury inevitably breeds in its wake. She gazed at him covertly, without being observed. He looked so downcast. Then she busied herself over the breakfast.

Kamalmuk kept on speaking all the while, as if in a reverie, softly, almost to himself, "Medzee-aden was now my only home, Medzee-aden on the lakes I love so well, with its hundred trails in every direction, the trails which

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my forefathers have beaten down, and breathing of marvelous tales from the past ages. Away from the people forever! Away from men, whose memory always harbours some bitter grudge, from women, so prone to intrigue, away from perpetrators of evil, whatever their complexion, whether copper-like, or of the sallow shades of peeled logs! Away from all, but the whispering shrubs and the trees sighing in the wind. What a wholesome relief, after such trials among my kind! And I made a song for my solace, a song that still dwells on my tongue day and night:

"'It startles me. . . . Do you hear? It tightens my throat, when I encounter human beings. So strange are they, so perplexing in their duplicity, and more frightful than ghosts awhistling in the clouds!

"'It startles me! It weighs on my breath, when I hear the owl hooting aloft, the large nightly owl of evil, who would fly away with me, the owl that screeches among the pointed gables in the villages of the dead!

"'Must I visit the bridge of shadows, the bridge whereon the souls of our departed moan for sorrow? Must I cross the river of tears before my time is full? O come and help me, lest I stumble on the way, come and lend a friendly hand! For I have no strength left, no strength and no heart, to follow the trail of my misfortunes to the end.

"Days passed over my brow, days of drizzle and gloom, till the sun thrust its rays through the clouds. A change came over me, the wondrous change that summer days bring with their warm caress. And the dark vision faded off. It gave way to a lure, to a song budding within me, yet all at once hovering without, the song of a spirit friend, of Musk Rat swimming down stream. Nay! It was not the voice of Musk Rat in the rippling waters; was not his *leemih*, as he floated over the beaver dam before my

eyes still brimful of tears ; was not the song I first thought. But the tune of Humming-bird, amid foliage and sunlight, a tune that loosened my breath, unshackled my fetters.

" 'Who is dead that makes you feel so sad, so forlorn?' hummed a bird of the radiant sky, 'Who is dead, so close to your heart? Droop you head no longer, for the fire might talk to your ear, the fire and the spirits that crackle within its tongues of flame. Are you not ashamed, O wanderer of the living forest, ashamed to be so disconsolate? Lift your brow and behold your beloved ones, for their embrace. Are you still as lonesome, still unaware of their cooing, hereabouts? When a tree falls by itself, it is for good cause : a spirit has struck it, struck it through the elderberry shrubs. Do not be afraid, if it crashes by your side. All dead trees must fall. Falling, they yield an opening for the spider-like feet of the sun, that the pale flowers underneath may turn into ripe fruit. Grieve no longer! You are not mourning for the dead. Shed no more tears, for the berries of the year may still ripen for your pleasure. Should they fail you, why bemoan anyhow, in the midst of blossoms and songs? If this be your grave, let it be a flowering grave in the web of the sun!' "

Lost in the train of thoughts, Kamalmuk had forgotten his hosts. He was dreaming aloud, as he had for many days, in the anguish of his soul. When Tsa'ols tendered him a cup, he came to with a start, dropping his hand on to the pistol at his belt, for self defence. But he instantly rallied, and sat down to the meal in the white man's style : a cup of steaming tea, some brown sugar and a trayful of hard biscuits. How welcome the relishing food, and eagerly coveted, after his privations! Reunited to his friends he enjoyed the banquet in silence.

"The woman from Segyukla has thrust herself into my life once more," resumed Kamalmuk, after breakfast.

"The woman responsible for all my troubles, the plague of my existence, stood near my cabin at Hillin, one day at dusk, calling to me as though I were still her mate. The impudence of her! I threatened to shoot her down on the spot, like a lynx, But I could not frighten her off. Oh, how I hate her, for all the suffering she has brought to me! She wailed all night outside, repeating the same words incessantly, like a mad woman. She had come all the way to save my life. Why, my life was in no need of her care! What is more, I would rather renounce it than owe it to her grace! Eagerly at dawn she spread a paper in my doorway, with lines of written symbols. Must I therefore listen to her explanation. She enquired, 'Are you acquainted with that man, Mr. Beach?'—'If I were not, I would not let you speak a moment to me now,' I retorted. She extolled him. Such an honest white man was he, so sincere and generous, and a true friend of mine! I reproved her for her useless chatter. 'Do I not know it, not from word of mouth, but from sound experience?' But how could he still care for me, now that the world had thrown me aside? She went on, 'I speak for Mr. Beach, who sends this paper to you, a paper on behalf of King George. The King, so it runs, is the true father of his subjects. He wishes no harm to anybody, in his kingdom. If killing a man is wrong at times, it is only right when the man is a witch. So declares King George, from his high station, so insists Mr. Beach, his trustworthy messenger. So must you be informed in quick despatch, for your own sake, for the comfort of your mind. You have no need to feel guilty, no need to hide as a criminal. Only learn this :—You must stand in the Law Courts in the presence of the magistrate, exculpate yourself, to recover your freedom. Such is the new manner, the White Man's *kawagyanee*, his way of tendering the white eagle

feather that brings back peace among his people.' This was Mr. Beach's message, his word of friendly advice for my own redemption. I was greatly moved. The tears came to my eyes.

"King George is a good father to his children, my friend Earthquake, we could not doubt it. This I have always professed, like yourself, in the face of much doubt among our old-fashioned tribesmen. Hs is blessed on his high throne, a throne only second to that of God in heaven, the God whom Beenee has taught our people to worship. My confidence in his word is complete, my faith in his justice unquestioned. Moreover, should we forget? His eye scans the earth from end to end, like that of a seer in a trance. No one can forever escape the grasp of his long arm. Even before the woman of Segyukla approached me, a new warning had reached me from the Nass, a warning from my father Wuda-hayets, 'Beware, my son, and be vigilant! I fret over your fate. Mark my word, the word of an old man—'You cannot dodge King George very long. His eye can detect everything, like that of the eagle planing over the tree tops. His hand can reach out for you, whenever his time is come. O my unfortunate child!'

"I knew it full well beforehand ; and I had only tried to fool myself, in my plight. I decided to come back, to give myself up to the Law. But I indignantly refused to follow her home. She must return alone, never again to disturb my peace. For we had parted forever at the time of my flight to Medzee-aden. Nothing can reunite us ; we live worlds apart. True, I must travel back to Kitwanga, but by myself. When? Soon, oh very soon, of my own accord, to undergo my trial, regain my freedom. And here I am with you, my friends. Never shall I lead the same life again, a life of hesitation, of ruinous

compromise, in the midst of shadows, the shadows of what we once were, not so long ago. I must go away, must be off for a fresh start. Perhaps I may become a white man, if my boss Mr. Beach will help me, a white man in a real town, the town of far off Victoria, where the Haidas and our sea-coast allies resort every year to barter their furs and amass fabulous riches."

Standing up, he took his leave, almost abruptly, emerged a moment from the morass of his thoughts, at the door, only long enough for a motion of the hand. And he slipped out, striking in jest the familiar drinking tune :

"I must follow the tracks of the mule, till long after sunset. Come, O come, old pal! Let the wind blow that tosses us like fallen leaves! Let the flagon tilt that puts us to sleep! Come, O come, lest I be frightened in my lonely heart!"

Earthquake hastened his preparations and early the next morning heaped up some luggage in his Haida dug-out. Now that the outlaw no longer fled the authorities, he seemed more anxious to proceed to the sea-coast. His errand had an air of mystery. And it was whispered about that a police badge of silver had devolved upon him along with high dignity ; that, in consequence, he was acting under instructions from the police quartered at Hazelton.

Warned of it, Kamalmuk once more visited him as he was fixing his leaf-shaped paddles on the beach. "Lucky devil!" he said, "I wish I could follow you down the smooth highway of the Ksan. The salt water is bitter, yet it goes to our heads like fire-water. We were born out of the ocean in the beginning, I dare say. The coast hails me like my

birthplace. My ancestor's home once stood at the edge of Krain Island, on the sea.

"But I should not wander so far afield, just now. . . ." he sighed despondently. "I must first make up my mind whether to surrender, or not, to the constables. O, how do I hate the notion! Yet, like a white man, I must obey the law, unwieldy as seem its ways, to our mind.

"My friend, what is your advice? Should I consider my fate secure in their keeping? Or should I not? Were Mr. Beach himself to issue a summons, I would not hesitate a moment. I trust him. But he has gone away, I hear, to my dismay. The constables are foreigners, all but one—Washburn, and I would be a fool to trust a single hair of mine to his palm. An old score between us still yearns for a settlement. He might not miss his chance, fair or foul. Surrender to constables, surrender to Washburn? Oh, how I hate the damnable nonsense! What do you honestly think, my friend? Do you believe I should take the risk?"

Pressed for an answer, Earthquake turned his face away, and shrugged his shoulders, with a fretful, evasive, "Hm!" He had not yet loosened his tight jaws, nor yet spoken a single word to his friend. Never again could they be such staunch friends as before. Their destinies now trudged divergent courses, beyond the range of their mutual comprehension.

Kamalmuk drew back, his eyes strangely glaring, and sat down a few paces from the dark waters that flowed before him as inexorably as fate. The stream which on the morrow would convey his compatriot Earthquake to the sea, might sweep back the large party of foreigners now on their way hither. Fresh news had just spread that the H.M.S. Caroline lay at anchor at the mouth of the Skeena, bristling with threats and mighty weapons.

And more than ever, the perplexity of his soul harassed his wearied body. He found but slight comfort in the ever growing song of his exile, which oft recurred to his lips in scattered fragments :

"It startles me. . . . Do you hear? It tightens my throat, when I encounter human beings. So strange are they, so perplexing in their duplicity, and more frightful than ghosts awhistling in the clouds!

"*Hay, hawmiday*! they left me alone, all alone behind, the forgetful ones who went on their way. Like an orphan am I—poor, lonesome, without friends, without relatives, *Hay, hawmiday*!

"Oh, how wretchedly they treated me! Young and old went on their way alone, forsaking me, their kinsman, their bosom friend. They abandoned me, empty-handed as I was, deprived of a living, anguished, forlorn, *hawmiday*!

"Were I Traimsem, the great Trickster of old, I would keep on fooling the people, the cruel heartless people of the Ksan ; I would fool them as he fooled our ancestors, fool them and play vile tricks on them all.

"Were I Leegwun, the underground spirit, I would shake my head for anger, shake it and make the earth tremble, tremble until the villages of man tottered to the ground.

"I know, O I know what they say of me, the people with chattering tongues. They laugh at my name, they gloat over my woe. But I shall stand, facing them, ere long, stand and mock at them, belittle them, the chiefs one and all!

"Samkwalaw, O you Woman-of-the-clouds, in what plight do you find me here! Distracted, abandoned, cast off by all on a barren shore. O Woman-of-the-clouds-above!

"My heart is aggrieved, the heart of me. What have they done, those who were my relatives, what have they done to their brother. O the sorrow of my heart!"

The lament of his soul coming to a stop, he shook his head as if forcibly to awaken his drowsy faculties; then he jumped to his feet, climbed the river bank, and vanished beyond the edge of the high bluff of yellow sand.



He reappeared at the hour of *weesah*, when the sun sat in the middle of the sky, and Earthquake had unmoored his canoe.

"I want to leave a word with you, my dear pal," he confided. "My advisors are now of one mind. They urge me not to linger at Kitwanga another day. Peril is imminent. My only safety lies in a new flight to the lakes and the mountain ranges afar. Spies—half-breeds—are scattered in our midst, ever on the alert, to traduce me. And the constables themselves, when seen, as often they are in unlikely places, make a parade of their weapons, which are loaded to the mouth for quick release.

"The villagers here, the Rabbit-people, denounce me as a reckless person. They say that I am toying with my very existence. You must have heard them, yourself? Or is it my mistake, O my poor head? They whisper that the Otter of Kitwanga, that enchantress of men, has snatched my soul away; that her lures always work havoc with outsiders like myself. The Otter is planning my downfall, whose tongue is tipped with flames, like those of the women of the Rabbit-tribe in our nation. The Otter, the accursed, yet alluring, woman-like, Watserh of the lakes, whose vapours intoxicate us into oblivion..."

Drawing back a few steps, and sinking into a soliloquy, he mused:

"My wish is to end my days in the waters of Ksenwah, the crystal waters of bliss. Their blessing revives a heart,

when the heart is sinking. Or I will quench my thirst at the springs of Winlono ; for I have drained the fount of Wiyip on the prairie to the very bottom. . . ."

The noise of the heavily loaded dug-out shifting on the rolling gravel of the beach drew Kamalmuk out of his day dream. He leaped on to the floating craft and bade good-bye to Earthquake and his few travelling companions on board.

"Only one more favour, from you, my friend," he emphasized ; "I know Legyarh, our illustrious sea-coast compatriot. My faith now rests upon him, for he wields thunder and lightning over the subdued wills of his Tsimsyan tribesmen. There is scarcely a marvel which he cannot accomplish. The new Man-of-war party will perforce seek his assistance and the help of his canoemen for a fee, to ascend the Ksan to our parts. No Ramk-seewah, no Peeled-log, would be such a daredevil as to attempt the feat alone. Let Legyarh withhold his services! Let the strangers attempt whatever they may, single-handed! Let their crafts be dashed to pieces against the rocky spurs at the canyon, or swallowed down by the whirlpools! And the trick is done. They will withdraw, browbeaten by the river itself, this river of ours which should forever stand the guardian of our homes. Mind you, this country is ours, not the White Man's! Should we let him drive his stakes too deeply in our soil, we might some day bite off our fingers for regret. The country would soon have passed out of our hands. It is time to open our eyes at last, high time! We are courting disaster pure and simple, disaster unlike any other in the past, ruin and sorrows untold. Legyarh will understand, if you only convey my urgent message. So will his fellow chiefs, Alim-larhæ—Who-knows-the-Sky, Skagwait—the chief of the Eagles, Nees-nawæ—the owner of many

slaves, and Dzee-us—the Shining-light of the heavens. You must declare, for your part, that we, tribesmen of the upper waters, will never tolerate the spoliation of our land. And we may still be like our forebears, the unquestioned owners of the Ksan and the masters of our own destinies in the face of the Sun."

Earthquake waved his paddle in the air as the hull of his canoe slipped away from the sand bar. Kamalmuk hastily patted him on the shoulder, exclaiming, "Good-bye, my friend, I wanted to greet you as you pulled out!"

"Remember," he cried, walking down along the edge of the river, "no more constables! Do not forget, speak to Legyarh. . . . !"

Earthquake, from his canoe, interrupted the flow of ejaculations on the shore, retorting, "I will do nothing so rash. Do not deceive yourself! You are a murderer. There is only one way open for a man like you : Surrender! Look to yourself!"

Taken aback, the outlaw kept on walking on the bank alongside the craft for a while, deep in thought. "Why did you not speak to me, speak sooner, when I sought your advice?" he complained. "Oh, if you think I should, then I will reconsider it all. . . . Never too late. . . . Good-bye, good-bye, friends!" More than ever he felt lost in his bearings. He travelled all alone in a new world, where men like him can find no shelter for their security.

Waving his hand a last time, he sat down on the brim of Akayeh's bluff, whence he could gaze down the river, afar ; and soon he unwittingly drifted back into his inner thoughts, to the lull of his own dirge song :

"*Hay, hawmiday*! They left me alone, all alone behind, the forgetful ones who went on their way. Like

an orphan am I—poor, lonesome, without friends, *hay, hawmiday*!

"So weak are my limbs, so weary, that I may fall by the trail. My eyes can see no longer, cannot perceive the people, my friends, cannot detect my foes. I hit the trees as I walk, mistaking them for shadows.

"Whatever in life I should have done I have failed to do. The path was deep for my feet to follow, the troop of my peers alongside was numberless as the boulders in a rockslide. Yet all alone I went on my way, bold and venturesome in my day. O, would I never had been born to the flickering light of dawn!

"My heart yearns for peace, the heart of a remorseful fugitive. My heart drips blood all the way, the broken heart of an unfortunate outlaw.

"When I run away to the mountain tops for very fear, the wind bellows after me, tosses me about like a dead leaf, blows me into the clouds beyond mortal reach. Were it that I should die ere the day is out, than behold the sun rise again on my misery, the misery of a wasted soul and forever forlorn!"

Blunders



EARTHQUAKE overheard voices, faintly, in the distance below Anræhs (Lorne Creek), as he was steering his dug-out in mid-channel down the river. He swung his craft shoreward, and gazed at the people—white men—walking upstream in Indian file, each of them shouldering a musket. Some Tsimsyan, behind, towed their canoe, and three others stood in it, poling all the way.

"Is that you, George?" shouted Earthquake, as he paddled near. "And you, Larahnits?" returned the captain, at the helm, whose familiar name was George Kitsalas, of the Canyon tribe. At this they all stepped ashore for an exchange of news and courtesies, while the white men stood waiting, a short distance above.

Earthquake inquired, in his laconic way, "Why all this?" Large-fin, a Tsimsyan of the Narrows replied, "We are towing their canoe," pointing to the strangers. "How far are you going?" asked Earthquake. "Oh, we don't know. . . . Neither do we care. . . ." replied Kauls, another boatman. "Here are the Peeled-logs, their police, with long guns, their food—heaps of it—, and plenty of fire-water in kegs. . . ."—"But what is their business?" persisted the man from Kitwanga. "Capture Jim, or go to hell!" was the unanimous reply.

Speaking to Kitsalas George, Earthquake further enquired, "How long do you intend to serve with them?" —"Maybe a day, maybe a moon" answered George lightly. "It matters little to us, as long as the pay holds and the

food lasts. . . ."—"I warn you, you may encounter trouble among my people," pointed out Earthquake. He dropped his voice low, that the white men might not hear, and repeated Kamalmuk's plea in earnest, as if it were his own, "No more constables here! . . . Let the Tsimsyan withhold their services! Let the strangers attempt whatever they may, single-handed! Let their crafts be dashed to pieces in the canyon, or swallowed down by the whirlpools. And the trick is done. . . . Remember, this country is ours, not the White Man's. . . ." Forgetful of his duty as a special constable himself, Earthquake now consulted only his native reluctance at what looked like foreign usurpation under thin disguise. He walked back to his canoe, wherein his companions waited for him, and repeated the warning, "Kamalmuk himself has arrived at Kitwanga. His mind when I left was not yet made up, whether to surrender or fight. Look out for yourselves—there may be trouble in store for you!" The canny Tsimsyan resorted to bravado, "All right, never mind! If he wants to kill us, let him come out. We are not afraid. . . . You, fellows of the Ksan, are real wild men, still hunting for human scalps."

Instead of joining the posse up the river, Earthquake went on his way down stream. His purpose at bottom was to retain the prestige conferred upon him by his shining police badge, while travelling at Government expense and dodging all unpleasant complications.

The police force camped at Lorne Creek for the night, there to stumble upon Lælt—Snake—, a Raven chief of the Rabbit-tribe, and his family, all busy fishing and curing salmon, at this season of the year. Here was their man, a native, strong and powerful, who might be useful in the quest for Kamalmuk! So decided Roycroft, Superintendent of Police, the leader of the party, who at once

sketched out plans accordingly. Snake would accompany him, take a letter to Jim, the outlaw, while his family would be conveyed to Hazelton for their care and safety. Fifty dollars was the fee, not to speak of other gifts. A splendid opportunity for a man who had nothing else to do but fish salmon! So openly agreed Kitsalas George, Big-Fin, and other Tsimsyan river-men close at hand. After some bargaining, it was settled that Snake would receive one hundred dollars in silver coins, if he actually delivered a letter to Jim, at Kitwinkul. The letter would speak for itself.

Roycroft was satisfied with his new recruit, until he landed at Salmon-weir (now Woodcock), the following evening. Snake looked gloomy ; the nearer they drew to Kitwanga, the more gloomy he became. A controversy had secretly arisen between him and the members of his household. Should he or should he not live up to the agreement? A hundred dollars in the hand was a great bounty. This new wealth would go a long way towards enhancing a man's prestige, when distributed as enforced loans at the winter festivals. But how would it achieve its purpose, procure credit and honour, if some indiscreet person, a rival perhaps, were to hint at its source, admittedly a polluted source? Then, instead of honour, ridicule and shame would be his portion. Snake was too cunning not to foresee the pitfall. He reluctantly resolved to wheel about and return to his fishing station.

Big-Fin, the Tsimsyan, shocked Roycroft with the news of Snake's imminent departure. "Do you not mean to help us, as agreed?" enquired Roycroft, facing Snake, to intimidate him. "*Ha'in* (No, I will not!)"—"Turn the hand-cuffs over to me," angrily ordered the Superintendent to a constable, as if to place the Gitksan under arrest. Snake enquired, "Did you, men, swear to go and

arrest the murderer?"—"We did!" the white men barked at him. "I never did," retorted Snake, emphatically; "you have no right over me. Neither have you any reason to ill-treat me or my family. Keep your dollars. I don't want them."

Roycroft shook his head in disgust, and released him with the words, "You can never trust one of those Siwashes. Another would do no better. They are all alike—not worth a damn!"

Kamalmuk's intention, when he quitted Kitwanga, was to drown his sorrow in the waters of Ksenwah, the crystal fount of oblivion. Their blessing would revive his drooping spirits. After he had drained their flow to the last drop, he would quench his thirst at the springs of Winlono. He wanted to forget and learn anew.

His long spell of isolation at Medzee-aden led him to seek companions, friends, with whom to share his burdens; he now dreaded solitude. The rupture of his family ties, the ruin of all past ambitions, was more than he could bear alone. He flung himself desperately into youthful arms, the arms of Larhyalk, a fair niece of the Raven head-chief, who responded with a warm heart. He craved for sympathy, for consolation. She lavished her unspoilt affections upon him, and cajoled him out of his lurid presentiments. He fancied her a redeemer. She clung by his side night and day, whispered to him words that were always the same, yet ever different. He liked her, loved her, pledged his faith. She made a new man of him. Love is a healer, whether it flows from the spring of Winlono or the blind instinct of self-preservation.

And he departed with her for Kitwanga, on the banks of the Ksan, where he had resolved to surrender to the

Law, obliterate the past, and seek ventures in life with a new mate by his side.

The evening of his reappearance with a bride at Kitwanga, he met with little else but reproaches from his elders. Why should he be such a confounded fool! Rather than tempt danger at the most exposed spot along the highway of the Ksan, why not seek cover in the midst of the endless forests where his forefathers had roamed in security for an age. Let him beware, if he still had any sense left to serve him!

Nothing could shake Kamalmuk's determination to remain overnight at the lodge of his friend Nee-ranyah, near the water's edge ; and after the night, as many days and nights as would suit him, his bride and their willing host. Let the wiseacres mind their own affairs! Let them keep their breath for other counsels!

He lounged outside the house before dusk and gazed up the trail in the direction of Sandilren, the Beaver-dam. Three constables for some days had been stationed in the mission house there, obviously on the look-out for him : Jim,[1] with the long whiskers, Billy Green, and another foreigner under the name of Homans. Before long he beheld one of the newcomers leisurely strolling down the lane for the evening inspection, holding a gun on his shoulder, and casually twirling his whiskers with his vacant hand. The outlaw drew back a few paces into the shrubs and, hidden in the foliage, stood motionless. His first glimpse of the Law reassured him. It was not as he had pictured it in his nightmares, almighty and breathing

[1] The names of the special constables are variously given as Jim Homans, Dick Loring (later Indian agent), Beach, Washburn, Walter Huff and Jim Brown. But it is evident that a few of these belonged to the *H.M.S. Caroline* party.

challenge like fire from the nostrils. The man impersonating it, when he passed by, chewing tobacco, distinctly reminded him of a *matih*, a mountain-goat with his funny beard, mobile jaw, and swollen grey eyes. Had Kamalmuk yielded to a sudden urge, he would have stepped out of the thicket and given himself up in complete security.

Yet, a deep sense of propriety forebade such a disgrace. How could a man of his standing, sought after by the King, the Man-of-war, and other high dignitaries, be apprehended thus, without any trace of ceremony, without a spectacular show of might, on the one side, and of dignified resistance on the other?

His thoughts reverted for contrast to the pageant of the White Eagle's feather at Kitwinkul, wherein both offender and avenger had encountered as if for a battle, then settled down to protracted peace negotiations. He remembered with emotion the dirges of the head-chief of Segyukla, the dramatic summons along the river's edge, the thrilling memories of Temlaham, the boasts of his illustrious uncle Great-wind-of-the-air, the dance in which he himself impersonated the Grizzly-bear, holding a copper in his jaws and parading in the midst of pyramidal wealth. And then—should he ever forget!—the ritual of consolation, the recital of the Woodpecker legend coupled with the display of its carved emblem, and the gift of the Eagle's feather for a memorable pledge of renewed friendship! If that be the Indian style of atonement and peace-making, what should be the equivalent for the White Man, whose superiority in most ways proved so overwhelming.

Kamalmuk was brave at heart. He would face Law and Justice, even under the shadow of big guns and men-at-arms. His mind was now solid as rock. Surrender he would, without flinching. But the event must be

decorously staged, as became the grandees of the land. He would not, if he could help it, stumble ignominiously like a churl between the legs of a goat-like saunterer, who resembled a beggar, a placer miner as he had previously known them in huge numbers. He must wait until all the forces mustered by King George had arrayed themselves against him, for a final dash Other constables were expected from Hazelton ; and the *H M S Caroline* party would in a day or two arrive on the scene. So he held his breath and waited until the unwelcome visitation had passed out of sight, almost out of his mind



He scooped handfuls of crystal water at the spring of the red alder trees Quenching his thirst, he began to hum the song wherein the Kitwinkul maidens, at the memorable peace festival, had greeted the advent of the supernatural Bear :

"O wanderers, why are you not afraid? How dare you venture on our domains? Great-wind-of-the-air is a prodigious chief ; he wields the Snake-belt like Thunder-bird ; his lodge is the house of untold marvels, the sharp-beaked Woodpecker, Standing-bear of the far corners, and Split-person with twin heads on a single trunk. Monsters spring out of the ground and go forth into the glare of day."

As he stood under the trees at the edge of the tiny stream, he drew out his toy-like pistol and began to shake it like a bird-rattle. His knees bent in cadence and his body swayed from side to side in unison with the song :

"Who ever compared in excellence with Great-wind-of-the-air, a good prince, a lavish host? Who ever came up to his elbow?"



YOUNG GITKSAN MOTHER WITH A CRADLE,
At the edge of the Skeena

By Edwin H Holgate

The buoyancy of his emotion made him forget his sorrow, the depth of his humiliation, and the uncertainty of the morrow. He burst aloud,

"Here I stand by myself, haughty, defiant. You travelled hither, O warriors, you travelled a long way, bow in hand, to shoot your arrows through my loins. But you knew not your delusion! My body is point-proof. I fear not your volleys. Behold the magic armour, my charm, that stops darts, deadens blows and harbours my pride! Like the rising sun I dispel darkness, flinging the clouds far away. A good prince am I, a great wizard!"

His boast no sooner ended, than he heard a faint sound, the echo of his voice among the shrubs at the foot of the cliffs to the north. While he stood, panting, he replaced his pistol in its sheath and wiped his brow with his sleeve.

The echo caught his ear a second time, to the south, louder and much nearer. He was puzzled at its owl-like ring, *Hulululu*! Then, a third time. The hooting now came from the west. He shuddered at the evil omen, and, to reassure himself, began to whisper the familiar saying about the nightly Owl :

"She lost her way, Nauhl's sister, the wife of Wakyas, lost her way on the hill-side, wandered long after dark, weeping in the shrubs, calling amid the trees, till the Owl responded, '*Hulululu*. . . .!'—'What is your name?' cried she, 'and the name of your child?'—'*Hulululu*. . . !' She dropped dead to the ground, Nauhl's sister, for answering the Owl, in the hills, long after dark, *hulululu*. . . !

"Said I, Kweenurhs, 'Outward I fly into the clouds, into the frosty expanse yonder. Beware, O beware the hooting of the Owl, the warning of approaching death, *hulululu*. . . !' "

Distracted, he stooped down and picked up a pebble at his feet. An owl screeched behind him, in the shrubs.

With a start he jumped across the stream, then stood still. The lugubrious call was not that of a bird perched on a tree top, but of human beings aware of his presence, quickly approaching from three sides. He heard twigs creaking underfoot, and waited, perplexed.

"I am bemoaning a loss that breaks my spirit," sobbed a voice, the voice of a man, in the clump of red alders; "the loss of the dear human-like Kamalmuk, He-who-partakes-only-of-ears, the ears of the dead ones. I am weeping to myself, in my sorrowful heart!"

—"Who are you, ally or avenger?" the outlaw wondered aloud, holding his breath for anxiety.

—"Once an avenger, greedy for a life, but now your ally, come to you at her bidding, the bidding of one who longs for reconciliation. Wait and listen though you cannot see me. Dzarom-stone is my name, which you know well—Wolf-frightened-of-footsteps, your mate's own sister and once more your friend. Listen to Sunbeams through my mouth. Hearken the words of one who mourns your absence no less than the loss of her beloved sons.

"Indifferent, without a heart, you are, O Kamalmuk! Why did you cast me off, you the only one left still dear to me? They ask of me, the people about me, the cruel, merciless people, they ask of me where you have gone, whether you shall return. Come, O come to me! See how miserable I am! I sit all by myself in our lodge, unable to retrieve our common loss alone. My sorrow takes away all comfort, all hope, even to my sleep, the sleep of night time.

"I lament my misfortune. The spirits have allowed this calamity to come over me, the evil spirits. O how I hate them, how I resent their mischief! A rainy sky drips water from morn to night. So does my sorrowful

heart. The rain drenches the earth, and the tears from my eyes splash on my knee.

"I cannot find the *halla-it* that will take away my grief, that will chase the evil spirits, that will restore bosom friends to me, my husband to my affection. He has gone afar to bear alone the weight of his grief. Alas, he has forsaken me! Though I stand close to him, looking into his face, he heeds me not and turns his face away. He heeds me not, heeds not my voice, though I call to him night and day!

"Who is he, who thus abandons me? Once a man, gentle and kind-hearted, the heir to a proud chief. So, at first, I thought. I hear his voice everywhere, who was my lord. His will filled the earth; he was my lover. Yet, was it all a mistake? Was he only the Nareets, the Wolverine impersonating a human being to lure me away from my people, lure me into the lake of perdition. . . ?"

The spirit-like voice ran on softly until the dusk of the evening changed to the darkness of night. Then its doleful rhapsody dropped to whispers, sobs and sighs. It mingled as in a dream with the ripple of the brook and the rustling of leaves in the wind.

"You made a mistake in the shadows of tall trees," began another voice, deeper and more resonant, the voice of Kuh-nelawp, Always-throwing-stones, hidden in the foliage. Aroused a moment out of his reverie, Kamalmuk moved back a step. Then, he stood like a stone pillar, while Always-throwing-stones delivered his message in a tone of sombre admonition :

"Is your sight getting feeble, that you stepped off the trail unawares? Born of wise parents, the scion of a noble lineage, how can you dissolve the ties that bind you to a mate, the ties created at the *ya-auk*, and forget the dowry established before all as a security for your faith? How

can you so abase yourself as to indulge in licence like a White Man, while you retain your abode in the land of your forefathers? O Kamalmuk, so forgetful, so erratic! You wander off into strange adventures. Your ambitions belong to a world unreal, a land full of marvels, a sea peopled with monsters.

"O Kamalmuk, like the Sun are you, the Sun hiding behind the clouds, or setting at night beyond the rim of the sky vault. We lost sight of you for a while. But our hope is that you will rise on the morrow. You strayed away, amid the clouds. We lost sight of you, even as of the Sun, on a day of rain and storm. We mourned your absence in our hearts, and longed for your return. We composed a song for our consolation, while we were down-hearted. Here are the words of our song :

" 'We shot our arrows aloft, at the mighty Grizzly of the Sky. A great devastation had visited our country, in the moon of *larh-siyæ*. Our fellow *hallaits* stood about in the melting snows, helpless, gazing upwards. The people stooped over the edge of the smooth running waters, watching for the return of the year. We heard the voice of the Robin at last. We were saved, we were saved, all but you, our friend! Said I, 'Outwards I will wade out into the waters to his rescue, to the rescue of him who has stepped down beyond his depth. Come back, O lost one, come back to the shore again, to the shores of the Sky!' "

Kamalmuk turned about. Angered, he flung the pebble, long held in his hand, at the voice that was thus blaming him for his infidelity. He fled downstream in a panic, but came to a stop. "*Hulululu. . . !*" screeched another voice, close to him, in the brush. "*Hulululu!*"

He listened. So mysterious, so ghostly was the hooting, that he feared the approach of a nightmare such as often pursued him after dusk.

Sitting down on a large boulder, he buried his face in his hands and began to sob like a child.

"My heart is aching," he lamented to himself ; "my heart is nearly broken. I cannot help it. My mind is veering to every wind that blows, it is nearly lost. They have thrown me aside, my kinsmen, they have disowned me. O me, O my head! I am a thoughtless person, so the people think of me. At my age I should know the truth. I should follow the right path. While I run out of breath, the Sun only walks. I heard the Loon calling me, so I believed ; but it was the voice of the Sawbill-duck instead, enticing me to the bottom of the lake."

Once again, a voice broke through the alder trees. A third messenger, Kumas of Segyukla, Small-chip-floating-downstream, unseen like the others, droned his reproof to the ears of the outlaw :

"Why did you succumb to the wiles of the Otter, the flighty and inconstant Otter who ever lures more men to their perdition? Are you imitating the lover of Ksemabul, Gopher-woman, who ran away with his sweetheart to the hill-tops, and there turned to a stone pillar for his fault?

"O hearken to reason now, hearken to the appeal of Sunbeams, our sister, your lawful mate—'I will blaze a new trail for you, and you will follow my footsteps, O misguided one!' When you emerge again among your kind, my fellow *hallaits* will stand abashed in the face of the new brightness that will light up the edge of the sky."

Rising to his feet, Kamalmuk walked down the foot-path. Like a man in a trance he echoed the words, "O

misguided one. . . ! misguided one!" as he went on his way.

When Kamalmuk reentered the lodge late in the evening, his host queried, "Have you seen them. . . , seen the constables? They walked down here, more than ever watchful in their inspection." The outlaw did not answer, perhaps failed to hear him. Nee-ranyah went on, "Yes, they came by with their guns, then went back to the Beaver-dam mission. With them there was Charles Riddley, the half-breed, a spy in their employ. They may all surround the house, block the way and prevent your escape." Kamalmuk only shrugged his shoulders. "We will prepare a hiding-place for you, at night," continued his host ; "in our salmon *cache*, behind the lodge. Or, if you prefer, you could find shelter in the woods, near the village. . . ." Kamalmuk calmly replied, "No, I will not hide outside. I am not a carrion yet, to be devoured by the flies of the Kitwanga sand flats."

At dawn the next day, there resounded three hard knocks on the door. Nee-ranyah's wife, panic-stricken, enquired, "Who are you? What do you want?"—"Open the door," the voice of Charles Riddley replied. "We have come for Kamalmuk." Nee-ranyah excitedly motioned his wife not to budge from her couch, and his guest to escape through the back door.

"Let them in!" ordered Kamalmuk, getting out of bed, and beginning to dress in haste. The door was unlocked, thrown open. Three constables rushed in, their guns cocked for instant action. Nonplussed, they stood facing the two Indians in turn, whom they had never

seen before. Nee-ranyah and Kamalmuk were putting on their clothes, the guiltless host much agitated, the outlaw, coolly adjusting his belt from which dangled the pistol within its sheath.

"Where is Kitwinkul Jim?" spluttered the gun-man with the whiskers, trembling obviously in his gum boots. Kamalmuk felt crestfallen at this ungainly demeanour of the Law. He had not expected it to come slipping into the house like a highway robber. He peeped outside, expecting to behold an army. But only Charles Riddley skulked there, alone, in the background. Then he stepped forth, stood between the intruders, faced them boldly, and enquired in Chinook jargon, "What are you trying to do?" They stared at each other without answer, uncertain of the next move. "We have come to arrest him. . . ," answered whiskered Jim. "All right," the outlaw advised, "Do it now, if you must. . . " Still they wavered, in a quandary, as to the next step.

With a whoop, Kamalmuk leaped out into the open air, as a mountain lion from a tree, and started to run along the lane towards the clump of dwellings of the Eagle clan, passed by, went beyond and halted between those of the Wolf chiefs, Lauts and No-fat, his own clansmen among the Rabbit-tribe. Let his shabby pursuers chase him, if they were worth the powder in their muskets! Disappointment and disgust overwhelmed him. His surrender was tapering into an abject affair. His pride was injured, his sense of fitness outraged.

A gun went off, in the distance behind him! Surprised, he raised his head and listened intently. They were willing to proceed with the arrest, then, to give chase after all. He might still experience the thrill he counted on, the thrill of succumbing to force, to the Majesty of the Law enthroned high over the world. Another gun shot, nearer ;

. . . . and a third. Three shots, for solemn warning. Surrender or suffer the penalty for resistance to sacred authority. But he failed to grasp the fatal meaning.

He gazed at them, as they cautiously advanced along the footpath, searching every bush on both sides. He took his little pistol in hand, and shook it like a rattle which the chiefs use to accompany their songs. He waited, leaning against Lauts' house ; then stood, jerking his knees for a dance, the Grizzly-bear dance which he had performed only two moons before, when facing the Fireweed avengers in their ceremonial search for redress.

"Who are they?" he began to hum, swaying his body from side to side, with growing excitement, "Raiders from the highways, trying to capture me? Fearful am I and deeply stirred. Who will pay my ransom, friend or relative, save me from their blows, the blows of the raiders from the highways?" And he instinctively waited for the maidens' chorus, "Child, my child, O my poor little child! . . . "

The soothing voice of the maidens failed him at the crucial moment of his life. Instead, there flashed from behind the report of a gun. He crashed down, his face ploughing the grass. Billy Green, the constable, rushed forth exultantly. While the other officers skirted the river's edge, he had taken the rear trail, so as to bar any avenue of escape. The moment he had spied his chance, he had made short work of the outlaw.

The pistol had dropped to the ground. Green picked it up and finding it loaded, fired a shell. Then he flung it down and yelled lustily for his compeers to come to his help.

They stood for a while gazing at the body. Jim Homans finally shook his head in disapproval, and murmured, "You have done a rash thing!"—"Why?" protested Green ; "the scoundrel was running away!" Homans reminded him, "We were sent ahead of the main

party only to locate him. Our strict orders were not to attempt to capture him until Dick Loring and Washburn had joined hands with us . . . , still less to shoot him down without provocation."

"Provocation, provocation . . . ," indignantly retorted Green ; "look here, before you speak another word. " He showed him the pistol, a chamber of which was empty of its shell. "Why, he fired at me first! There was nothing else to do but shoot to kill in self-defence. The damn s . . . !"

Stirred out of his coma, Kamalmuk overheard the words, 'He fired at me first,' and, in a supreme effort, mustered the strength to utter his denial, "He fired it himself. . . . " A stream of blood gushed between his distended lips. He coughed, and a red streak squirted from his back. The bullet, entering from behind, had run clean through the right lung ; and the wound was deadly.

"Boys, we've got to hang together!" cried Billy Green. "Stow him in the dug-out!" responded Homans. Leaning their muskets against an Indian house, they began to drag the body along the path to the steep river bank. Riddley, their half-breed spy, overtook them, crying, "Stop that, you cowards! You have killed him. Why dishonour his remains, drag them in the dirt?"

The Indians, many of whom had just returned from the sea-coast, peeped out of their doorways. Aroused out of their morning sleep, they gaped and wondered, then began to gather on the bluff, behind the houses. "The constables have shot Kamalmuk, have shot him dead!" were the words that rippled through the whole length of the village. In the wake of the first news followed a disquieting rumour : "Unwilling to carry home the whole

body, they want to cut off his head, for a trophy!" Excitement at once leaped forth like wildfire. Riddley warned the constables, "You fellows had better go straight back to Hazelton—the sooner you are out of this, the safer for you!" They waited for no further prompting, but took to their heels up to the Beaver-dam, then beyond, along the trail overland.

The Legacy



N Indian runner from Kitwanga preceded the constables to Hazelton, spreading along the way the news of Kamalmuk's death. It was unwelcome tidings to the white settlers. The killing of an Indian by the police, even if justifiable, would, they knew well, stir up trouble among the natives, reopen the old wounds, perhaps fan the slumbering embers of rebellion into flames.

The chief of the posse, Loring, betook himself down the river in a dug-out the next day, with a few special constables. If his delegates had blundered, as he surmised they had, it devolved upon him to ward off the consequences.

Approaching Kitwanga he bade his crew pull ashore, on the sandbar opposite the village, for deliberation. Doleful singing issued from within the houses. He well knew its significance. Mourners in numbers were performing their duty day and night over the body of the outlaw. Would the Rabbit-tribe, he wondered, resent the presence of outsiders at this juncture?

Children, lounging among the totem poles in the sun, spied the newcomers and gave warning to their elders. Peeled-logs across the river—white men—look! The next instant, the villagers poured out of their houses with guns, axes, hatchets, knives, and sticks, lined themselves up at the river's edge, shouted like madmen, and sought to frighten the intruders off their land, with sweeping motions of the arms. Loring waited until their fury had

partly burnt itself out. Then he ordered his men to paddle briskly across, while the constables held their guns cocked for action.

After a parley through interpreters, both sides agreed to lay down their weapons, while further negotiations were continued on the shore. The Kitwanga chiefs donned their regalia in haste, as soon as they learned that a big White Chief honoured their town with his presence.

Gratified, indeed, were they to hear from his mouth that the constable was guilty of a mistake, a grave mistake, that the responsibility rested upon his own shoulders, and upon no one else's ; that he would be brought to Court a prisoner, for a speedy trial. Justice and redress must prevail for all, white man and Indian alike.

Informed of the legal requirements, they permitted chief constable Loring to enter the funeral chamber and inspect Kamalmuk's remains, so that a retribution might visit his slayer the more effectively. An air of solemnity pervaded the death chamber, wherein rows of female mourners squatted, and incessantly sighed or wept for grief. Loring removed his broad hat with a pompous sweep of the hand, and bowed his head in sign of condolence. His courtly demeanour—was he not of aristocratic birth—won their approval, impressed them, who till that day had met only the least mannerly of the white people. And their ruffled feelings at once ebbed like the tide at the estuary of the Skeena. The chiefs stood by his side in ceremonial garb, some with the headgear of the Eagle, others with that of the Raven or the Thunder-bird ; and for a long while they gazed together in mournful silence at the remains of Kamalmuk, a good man in his lifetime, a prince in his nation, one of the highest, and above all a friend of the White People, yet shot down by their emissary none-the-

less for his only reward, shot most ignominiously like a slave by his owner in the days of old.

Kamalmuk's body lay rolled up in a complete bolt of cotton. When it was unwrapped, at Loring's request, all present beheld the figure of the Bear tattooed on his chest, a Grizzly Bear sitting erect, paws lifted and tongue protruding, as on the carved poles. The officer marvelled at the regal coat-of-arms, commenting, "He was a chief, a prince among his people. What a pity he should have met with such a death!" Then he sketched out the Bear emblem in a note book, inserted the bullet hole in his flank, and took notes in the course of ostentatious, almost sacramental, observations. The chiefs of the Rabbit-tribe were much gratified. Only, before he took his departure, they exacted that he inscribe his promise in writing, on behalf of the King : The constable had shot Kamalmuk, had killed him like a dog. Therefore redress was imperative. The Court would grant it for the consolation of his relatives, so that their shame be wiped off and their grief consoled to their full satisfaction.

This received, they escorted him in a procession to the shore, singing a dirge along the path, the song of the Humming-bird, which Kamalmuk had composed in the days of his exile :

"Who is dead, so close to your heart? Droop no longer your head : the fire might talk to your ear, the fire and the spirits that crackle within its tongues of flame! Lift your brow, and behold your beloved ones, ready for your embrace!

"When a tree falls by itself, it is for good cause : a spirit has struck it, struck it through the elderberry shrubs. Do not be afraid, if it crashes by your side. All dead trees must fall. Falling, they yield an opening for the

spider-like feet of the sun, that pale flowers underneath may turn into ripe fruit.

"Grieve no longer! Shed no more tears ; the berries of the year may still ripen for your pleasure. Should they fail you, why bemoan anyhow, in the midst of blossoms and songs? If this be your grave, let it be a flowering grave in the web of the sun!"

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Indian unrest meanwhile spread elsewhere like a forest fire. The little Hazelton community now gladly resorted in a body to what the winter before was dubbed Clifford's Folly. The dusky population surrounding it had increased fourfold overnight. Danger loomed large, imminent. The Reverend Mr. Field alone refused to be stampeded, protesting that the Word of God would forever be disgraced in the eyes of the heathens if its spokesman dug himself in like a groundhog in a sand pit.

A sigh of relief went up at the approach of the *H.M.S. Caroline* party. Roycroft and his constables, not to mention the Tsimsyan canoemen, were numerous enough by themselves to silence the vicious outbursts of the previous nights from the steep bluffs. But where should they find accommodation? Mr. Field volunteered a solution. They might avail themselves of the school-house, also used as a church on Sundays. Welcome to the visitors!

No sooner was the baggage unloaded than Roycroft resorted to the Hudson's Bay Company's store, to conjure a jug of the so-called Elixir of Life. The trip from the sea-coast alone had lasted thirteen days, and a leak had sprung in their supply of spirits, draining it prematurely to the last drop. Brandishing the jug like a trophy, he installed it on the side table which Mr. Field meant for an

altar, and gave a war whoop, "Come on, boys!" And the boys flocked around their leader, responding to orders in admirable form.

"What is all the fuss about?" blurted out Roycroft, when he had recovered from the exertions of the trip, the next day. And, settling down to business, he soon got the gist of local affairs. Two Indians from Segyukla, now under arrest, were to be tried for the murder of Tupesuh, the lunatic; Mawlahan, the head-chief, and another, whose name was declared unpronounceable. Constable Billy Green, besides, was being held for shooting down Kitwinkul Jim, the outlaw.

Captain Fitzstubbs, of the party, was the magistrate. But a local jury could nowhere be mustered. The Indians had vanished from the hamlet. The Man-of-war already had worked wonders in pacification. "They got cold feet, huh! took to the woods," deprecated the Superintendent, more disgusted than ever with the 'Siwashes' and their ways.

He temporarily discharged twelve of his special constables, converting them with a wave of the hand into a regular jury. The trials opened, proceeded scrupulously according to rule and schedule, and came to a close for lack of material witnesses—all in less than an hour. The record as remembered stood thus : Chief Mawlahan and his compeer, of Segyukla, acquitted ; Billy Green, constable, Irishman, a bully, of huge size and powerful limbs, also acquitted.

With this pronouncement the Skeena River Rebellion was officially closed. The Kitwinkul Jim muddle hereafter would not be the Government's concern.

The homebound officials of *H.M.S. Caroline* had to pass a few days later in front of Kitwanga, down the

river, in their Haida canoe. Their Tsimsyan guides tapped their heads forward with the leaf-shaped paddles, admonishing, "You fellows, stoop low down! Any White Man seen here for a while is ripe for the graveyard." They conveyed home the reassuring report that they had successfully accomplished their duty. The Rebellion had been quelled. The tribes of the Skeena once more obediently observed the Law of the land.

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Reserves were laid out by the Government some years later, for the confinement of the Indians within clear-cut boundaries. Mr. Vowell, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the province, arrived for the purpose at Kitwinkul, accompanied by his officials : Ashton Green, a surveyor; Loring, the Indian Agent ; Mrs. Hankin, interpreter ; and lesser officials to boot.

Notified beforehand, the dignitaries of the Kitwinkul tribe, the heads of the Wolf, Raven and Fireweed families, waited the Government delegation in a large hall bedecked as for high festivals in honour of their distinguished visitors.

The Superintendent entered at the head of his party. His was a seat of honour beside another for the Indian Agent, on a platform at the rear ; ordinary white man's chairs covered with the skins of grizzly bears, the stuffed heads of which rested on a flooring of white gravel from the river bed. The four corner posts of the house consisted of huge Grizzlies, sitting erect, tongues protruding and paws outspread—wood carvings were they, representing the emblem of head-chief Weehah, Great-wind-of-the-air, whose august name is handed down through generations. The Union Jack, the Hudson's Bay Company's flag, and trophies from the hunt hung on the walls around. Amazed,

Mr. Vowell gazed at the queer decoration, frowned, and had the bear skin pulled off his chair, before he consented to approach it. As he leaned forward to sit down, he turned sideways and found himself face to face with a life-like effigy—a man carved out of wood, standing beside his chair, with round eye-balls staring fixedly at him. On his cheeks four marks like crosses in vermilion red; on his body, a light grey shirt streaked with ancient blood stains and a hole torn at the breast; a bullet in his outstretched palm; and a sheet of paper on which a few lines of writing were scribbled, pinned in the shape of a conical hat on his head. Mr. Vowell was shocked at the ghost-like apparition. He could barely control his temper.

A procession at this moment entered the front door, men in Indian file, their heads bulging with outlandish head-dresses, and their shoulders displaying Chilkat and buttoned blankets. Chiefs were they one and all, holding guns in their hands, as in a military parade. They advanced along the walls on both sides and occupied their seats.

Without rising from his chair, the Superintendent imperiously bade his interpreter reproduce his words, "I have come to lay out the reserve for the Government. Is there anything else you want to know, before we begin?" The interpreter, out of her habitual sly humour, translated: "He is a Government man. His job is to park you on a reserve. That's all he cares to tell!"

A murmur brushed around the hall, and dusky countenances reflected keen disappointment. A young man, acting as spokesman for the chiefs, advanced a few steps and said, reverently, in English, "Great chief, do you see this?" and he pointed to the gruesome wood-carving beside the seat of honour.

Thoroughly vexed, Mr. Vowell turned to his interpreter with a sharp, "What does the beggar mean?" The

interpreter explained—from life long experience she fairly grasped the native mind—, "You, White Man, are responsible for the death of our prince Kamalmuk. Here is the blood on his shirt, and the bullet hole in his breast! Behold the very bullet that tore the life out of his lungs. On his head sits a paper. The paper holds King George's pledge to punish his murderer and compensate his relatives for the injury. All these years they have waited in vain. Now is the time for a settlement. Meanwhile keep your hands off our country. That is their meaning." And with a grin, coupled with a shrug of the shoulders—knowing him as well as she did—, she echoed the words, "Great Chief, do you see the point?"

The assembly hummed its unanimous approval.

Vowell jumped up, blood in his eyes, and shouted, "Lay down your guns! Don't you dare talk to me with guns in your hands."

They at once put their guns down on the floor. The interpreter volunteered in a whisper, "You need not be afraid of the guns. They are only part of the get up. . . ."

Vowell would not listen to the spokesman any longer. The meeting for him had come to a close. He turned his back to the audience, and walked to the Grizzly-bear carving in the corner, poking it with his cane.

"What do you mean by standing these horrors up?" he gruffly demanded, without pausing for an answer.

"How ill-mannered is that Chief!" deprecated Shining-face-of-the-Sun, an old woman in the front row, "Has he never learnt anything? Is he not aware that these figures represent us, our very selves, our family, the Wolf clan of Kitwinkul?"

The Superintendent walked out. Standing in the open, he breathed with greater ease. The Kitwinkul

elders, greatly upset, already streamed out of the council house.

Quickly recovering his wits, and conscious that he had in no way furthered his cause, he enquired in a lighter vein, "Who is the chief here, anyhow?" An Indian beside the door, carrying his regalia in a bag, answered, "I am the head-chief."—"What, you!" Vowell burst with laughter ; "By George, if you are not David Moon, that used to saw wood for me, when I was Gold Commissioner in the Omineca!" The old Indian did not show any displeasure at the jeer. He acquiesced mildly, with a thoughtful smile. The Superintendent sneered, "How did you ever become a chief, Dave?" Moon replied with dignity, "All the time a chief. That's me!" and went hastily away.

The Government officials departed without surveying the Kitwinkul valley, without defining the boundaries of the reserve. The moment was not deemed opportune for their activities. On the way home, the interpreter humoured her leader : "I thought," said she, "that you were afraid of the wooden bears."—"Confound the bears!" he exclaimed ; then, in due humility, he confessed, "Had I listened to their nonsense, I might after all have surveyed their reserve. But it's no use, I cannot suffer an Indian to dictate to me. . . Never!"

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The Court decision handed down years before at Hazelton was final. The Kitwinkul Jim affair was settled, never to be reconsidered. Superintendent Vowell implicitly accepted its verdict, as such officials will to the end of time.

The Kamalmuk episode is now sinking in the quicksands of tribal recollections ; it forms a chapter by itself in

the obscure annals of native Canadian races struggling against fate without a ray of hope. It is a closed chapter to most of us, and hopelessly forgotten. It forms the last page of the Downfall of Temlaham, the earthly paradise of old lost long ago to a sinful race of man. A closed chapter. Yet, it remains a live issue with the Wolf clan of Kitwinkul, and a host of kinsmen and allies among the Ksan tribes abroad. It yearns for a conclusion. Meanwhile it poisons lives and perpetuates hate.[1]

Kamalmuk is dead. His bones are decaying under the sod. The memory of his misfortunes is quickly fading. The frail wooden monument erected over his grave at Kitwanga will soon crumble to bits. But his relations have not ceased to mourn his loss. They still hold the White People guilty of crime, and doubly responsible for his death, since he was their friend and his dishonoured memory was refused the least atonement.[2] Their rancour broods underground perpetually : it flares up at times and vents its age-long bitterness, while time passes and carries on its work of obliteration elsewhere.

No White Man to the present day can set foot unmolested on the tribal domains of the Kitwinkul natives, domains that stretch spaciously around the lakes and beyond the mountains from Kitwanga northwards to the Nass. That promised land, which prospectors, hunters and ranchers have coveted for a generation, is still out of reach, unsettled, unsurveyed, unpoliced. It is still an Indian country, effectively guarded—perhaps the last

[1] Several Kitwinkul chiefs were arrested, tried and sent to goal, in the summer of 1927—after this manuscript had left our hands—, for interfering with Government surveyors at work on their lands.

[2] If the Government had erected a hundred dollar tombstone over his grave and allowed another hundred in compensation to the relatives, the difference would have been settled at an early date, on the very terms set down by the natives themselves.

unconquered native stronghold of the Red Man in North America.

It is Kamalmuk's homeland, the land that harbours his everlasting grudge as a lone monument to his memory. His ghost will forever drag his disgrace all over the northern sky, whistle in the clouds at night and moan in the shadows of its tall trees at all seasons of the year. And his song of grief will fade out only when the last of his race has died off or surrendered to foreign domination ; the Song of Lost Souls in a world without mercy :

"*Hay, hawmiday*! They left me alone, all alone behind, the forgetful ones who went on their way. Like an orphan am I, —poor, lonesome, without friends, *hay, hawmiday*!

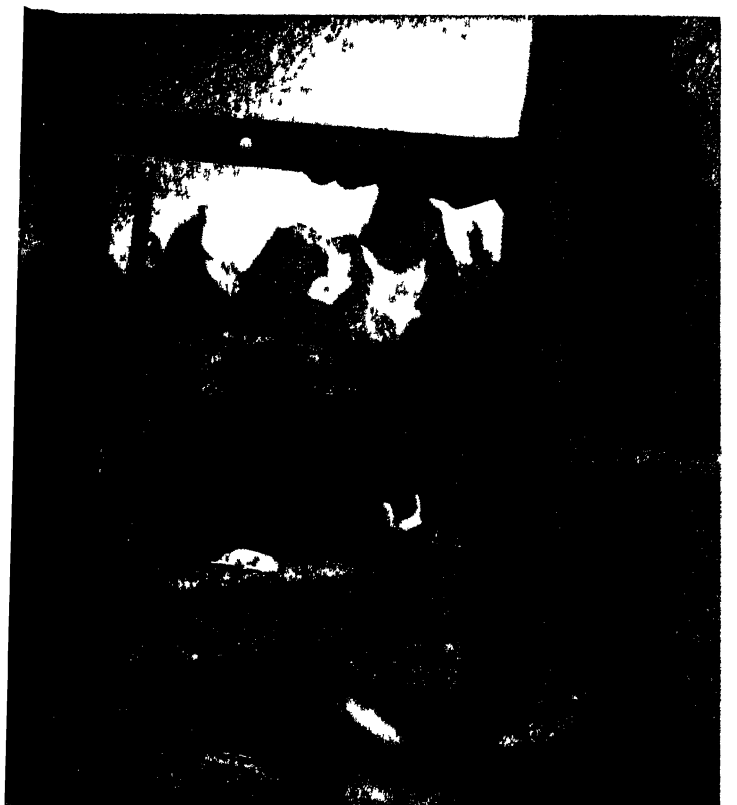
"So weak are my limbs, so weary, that I may fall by the trail. My eyes can see no longer, cannot perceive my friends, cannot detect my foes. I hit the trees as I walk, mistaking them for shadows.

"Whatever in life I should have done I have failed to do. The path was deep for my feet to follow, the troop of my peers alongside was numberless as the boulders in a rockslide. Yet all alone I went on my way, bold and venturesome in my time. Oh, would I never had been born to the flickering light of dawn!"

The RETALIATION *of* KEEMELAY

"*Hearken, you all, that you may know and never plead ignorance! Hearken! In Hanamuk's keeping are the sacred traditions of Temlaham, of epic struggles between the Fireweeds and the Ravens of an age of bliss in the land of plenty, and of the downfall and dispersion long ago. Hearken, you all, and remember to the end of time!*"

(Thus spoke Great-wind-of-the-air, chief of the Kitwinkul, at the festival for Hanamuk's induction, in the fateful year of 1887. Page 40)



TOTEM POLES OF GIT-SEGYUKLA

By Edwin H Holgate

The RETALIATION *of* KEEMELAY

Kunradal Triumphant



THE beaver hunters arrived at their mother's lodge in Keemelay after sunset. They entered it without a cheer or a greeting, and for a while stood like shadows against the groundhog robes hanging from the low rafters above their heads. Weary, they ignored the warm dish which their younger sister tendered them for a welcome, weary and despondent in their hearts. And their relatives gazed upon them in suspense, while they drew off and sat by the post in a corner of the house.

Bearers of evil news they were ; else, why rally home so soon, so unexpectedly? Four of them, brothers all, had departed from Keemelay in the town of Temlaham two moons before on the trail to their beaver preserve at Lake Keenamauk, where they resorted in the season of fallen leaves every year. But now, only three had returned, with burdens light and provision bags empty ; had returned only three, in the midst of the bounteous season when the hunters visit their deadfalls and the game teem in the forest, their tracks dotting the snow that covers the ground like an ermine blanket in the moon of cold.

The old chief of the household addressed them, as he still reclined by the fire, "Welcome to you, my sister's sons, welcome!" They answered, "We return thanks,

grand-uncle!"—"My children," resumed the chief, "it ever thrills me to get news from Keenamauk, our hunting-ground, from the marshes of the wild celery and the lakes of the many beaver dams I once knew so well. But here you remain speechless, while I am waiting, perplexed. Why are you silent, tell me? Did a hunter's luck fail you in the chase this season that you seem so sullen in my presence? Where, may I know, where did you part with your elder brother? Is he not also coming back, the dear lad, to cheer the aged uncle by the fireside whose time is nearly ended?"

"O chief," replied his nephew, the leader of the three, "May your familiar welcome ever greet the hunters when they migrate from Keenamauk! The lakes of the wild celery this year have not yielded their wonted harvest; we have walked home backwards as it were, nay, anguished, heartbroken. A spell hangs over their dark waters, a spell from some hidden cause." The old man pondered aloud, "A spell or, I venture, evil luck that befalls a hunter for a breach of the law, of taboos—how do I fear it!—of the taboos that grace or mar a woodman's life."

"A spell," assented the nephew, "or rather, evil luck for taboo transgression." Whispers thereupon passed round the household, "Evil luck, evil luck. . . " The hunter continued, "What else verily could it be? How otherwise do mishaps ruin a man in the chase? We suspected foul play, perhaps in his very home, and forthwith tramped the trail from the lakes homewards, to find out for ourselves. Our eyes are keen; keen too our ears. Woe to the villain who has betrayed us in our absence, who has brought misfortune upon our worthy leader!"

"What ails him, the poor child?" entreated the grandmother. "Where did you leave him, I beseech you?" The hunter now confessed, "When the vault of the large

beaver dam caved in, it was under his very feet as he stood on it. So it has come to pass, O grand-mother! From the hour of *yuhs* to that of *haluh*, from sunset to early dawn, we heard his moans within, and could not rescue his body before the break of day. . . . Thence we travelled to Keemelay day and night without cease. . . . "

The fire slowly dwindled to embers, and the shadows thickened in the lodge. Children and serfs retired for the night, at the grand-mother's bidding, and left the elders to the secret of their midnight counsels. It was the hour of *laskeh*. Aunts and uncles then remained motionless, like charred stumps in the hoary winter night that had swept over the land.

Still, as they waited, there arose the murmur of two voices, in turn high and deep ; the laughter of mirth, light and playful, which many times had disturbed them the nights before ; the revelry of benighted lovers abroad! And forsooth it issued all from the lodge of the secluded daughter-in-law, the wife of the companion-hunter whose misfortunes so darkened their thoughts. The rustle persisted far into the night, of itself disclosing tragic folly, a fatal transgression of the rule. Indignation meanwhile consumed the Keenamauk woodsmen as they listened, ambushed in the dark. If treachery ever showed its face anywhere, was it not here at their very doorstep? The woman who would thus flout the law, oh, the daughter-in-law so rash and so false-hearted! For a wife to her husband is faith-bound, and never more than when he toils for food and pelts in the forests and the mountains far away. She must fast for days, bathe at dawn, masticate the root of the devil's club morning and night. Above all, must she shun the company of people, of strange men, in her seclusion. Else the taboos are broken, the game scent the traps and avoid them, the spirits of the wilderness

whip the winds in their wrath, and punish him whose spouse at home betrays her trust in his hour of need.

Abalone-pearl-labret, the mother of the Keenamauk hunters, heaved a sigh before dawn. She sighed deeply and began to cry in her bosom, "Son, my eldest son—! Oh, the grief in Pearl-Labret's heart! Algyah, algyah, algyah." Her voice drawled out like that of the mourners in a dirge. Awakened, her daughter Skawah sat up, bemoaning, "Mother, O mother, why this chant at night?" The dirge singer answered, "My child, be silent as becomes your youth! I was singing to myself in a dream of moving shadows."—"Mother, but you are weeping all the while," continued Skawah, "and I know your lament ; 'tis our family's own song of death, the one chanted in state at a chief's funeral pyre." Pearl-labret exclaimed, "Must you know it then, must your ears be hurt, O fair maiden? My son, your brother, appeared to me in a dream ; he had fallen through a beaver dam. I heard him groaning at night, and saw his body fastened at daybreak to a burial tree in the bush. My son, my eldest son! Algyah, algyah, algyah!" Both mother and daughter now lamented together, for they believed in the truth that is revealed in dreams. They rehearsed the song of ancient days, the song of sighs, of tears and mournful outbursts from the heart. They sang in turn, "O my son!"—"O my brother!"—"Algyah, algyah, algyah!"

The three avengers presently stood up and kindled the embers in the fire-place. They lighted a torch of birch-bark over their heads and hafted a keen blade to their spear shaft. Their leader then walked out of the house, holding the spear in his right hand and, in the left, the live torch, while his brothers waited dumb and spell-bound. And their

thoughts leaped together like flashes : Revenge, revenge that castigates the guilty, fulfils the law, and restores equity among the people! Revenge that frees the soul of the departed and clears the trail in the western sky! Revenge that soothes brooding minds and bitter hearts! O sweet revenge!

But the man with the spear re-entered the lodge backwards. He had failed.

The second avenger relighted the torch, took hold of the spear and broke into his brother's lodge. And he too withdrew at the mere sight of the transgressors, defeated without a blow. The youngest of the three in his turn went forth, spear and torch in hand.

When he reappeared he threw down the spear shaft, which was broken asunder, and the remains of the torch which still smoked in his hand. "Brother dear!" he sighed in a prayer, "may your soul travel unfettered hereafter!" And, standing close to the sweat-vault by the fire-side, he scattered handfuls of hot ashes in every direction. "Evil days," he gave warning, "evil days have come upon us. He whose presence in our brother's lodge disarmed us even in his sleep, he whose head now drips blood from the beams over the swing door, was no other than Panarhsont's eldest nephew. . . ."—"Aye!" confirmed the others, "the nephew of the Kunradal chief, the favourite nephew and chosen heir of our powerful neighbour across the river."

The brothers then joined together, "Danger is near, O mother! Our enemies are mighty, and here we must face them undaunted. Mind only the maiden Skawah, our younger sister. Save her life; spare her the fears which now beset our existence! And if we fall in a battle, be it not without a ray of hope, the hope for redress some day that will comfort our manes! Let Skawah's posterity

be bred in our memory and forever be blessed by the friendly Powers on high!"

Their duty accomplished, they trampled upon the smouldering embers, and, lying down, fell into a stupor, while the chills of the north descended upon them through the smoke-hole, out of a starless sky above.



No town more vindictive than Kunradal ever thrived in the whole valley of the Skeena. When it emerged from a white mist late in the morning, its very sight across the river, the number of its dwellings stretching in a single line along the high bank, brought renewed misgivings to the dwellers of Keemelay. But the absence of the chief's nephew could not so soon arouse suspicion. The smoke still curled over the many roofs; the *khas* or slaves still hauled firewood over the trails in the snow and drew water from holes in the ice down at the river's edge below.

The following day, Panarhsont plainly missed his young relative. Barely any smoke arose from the sky-opening of his large house—a sign of growing anxiety—, and only a few inmates ventured out in ominous restraint. The braves of Keemelay meanwhile gathered their weapons in readiness, abstained from food and liquid, and chewed the roots which, in time of war, produce fortitude and exaltation.

Suspense besieged every threshold, on the morning of the third day. No smoke from any of the lodges yonder, no smoke and no sign of life. Kunradal looked deserted, empty. Yet no one doubted the presence of a multitude under its snow-capped roofs and the tense strain of the counsels that prevailed within.

When the sun sat high in its course, at the hour of *weesah*, the door of the head-chief's house in the centre

of the town swung open from the bottom. A woman stepped out unescorted, with an unlighted torch in her hand. She walked down the slope to the river; nearer, along the footpath over the ice; and, presently, to the centre of Keemelay itself.

"*Tilkuh*—fire!" she begged, upon entering the first house in the village. "My master's fire went out after sunset. *Tilkuh!*" And she squatted down beside the sweat-vault by the fire. As she lighted her new torch of pitchwood, she covertly gazed from under her hood for traces of her master's favourite nephew. A *kha*, a slave was she, a spy, calling under the guise of an ancient privilege, that of borrowing fire from a friendly neighbour. Her guests dared not molest her, for fear of thus confessing their guilt and bringing about the clash wherein numbers would triumph in the end. She proceeded back to her master's home in Kunradal with the torch burning over her head.

Reappearing with a new torch the next morning, the *kha* entered the lodge that stood next to the chief's. "*Tilkuh*—fire!" she prayed. "My master's fire went out after sunset. *Tilkuh*!" The Keenamauk hunters, who now occupied the seat of their deceased brother, answered from the rear, "*Kha*, how truly worthless must be the fire-keepers of your chief, our proud neighbour!" The slave thereupon picked up a live coal with bark tongs, and blew sparks on to the dry moss in her torch, again spying with a keen eye for clues all around.

She departed slowly, with her torch ablaze. Opening the door, a drop of liquid fell on her instep. It was cold; she felt it. Dark blood, she saw it, gazed at it in the light of day, and forthwith stumbled, quenching her torch in the snow. She retraced her steps, re-entered

the lodge. "*Kha!*" exclaimed the youngest of the brothers, "is it the gossip from your chief's house that you may after all spread to our fireside?" The slave relighted her torch, muttering, "There is none, great chief, none that is mine to tell! I stumbled on the ice at the threshold, only that; and the ball of fire rolled out of my torch into the snow."

Returning to the door, she glanced upwards from under her hood. There she beheld the awful trophy—a head adorned with *tsik* beads from the sea and ear-pendants of abalone shell, blue and green; the bleeding head of her master's nephew, suspended above, at the end of a salmon spear. She gazed at it, and dropped her torch to the floor, running for fright out of the second house of Keemelay.

Then she stopped and, collecting herself, leaned back on the steep bank facing her master's village across the river. "I have seen it," she cried out to the winds, "seen it with my eyes, the head with shell cones and pearl earrings, blue and green; seen it in full daylight, as it dripped blood from the rafters aloft, the rafters where the murderers of Keemelay have suspended it in their lodge." And her lament rang out, like a song of death, the dirge of Panarhsont's chosen nephew whose days were now ended.

A motion like a shudder passed over Kunradal while the slave was still crying mournfully. The doors sprang open; the shrill voices of women in response burst into chant-like lamentations; and the warriors ran about in a riot, some yelling for rage, and others shouting their vows of reprisals to the very heavens above their heads.

Abalone-pearl-labret spread her skin robe over her fair daughter Skawah and led her to the inner partition

of the house, wherein are secreted a family's sacred possessions. With her hands she scooped up the earth from the floor and raised a copper shield, which hid a passage extending to the forest tangle in the rear. Both mother and daughter crawled down the narrow opening, resetting the shield behind them. Thus they passed off from the light of day into the gloom of a refuge underground, while the Kunradal warriors in fearful numbers swarmed over the ice on the river.

As the fugitives crouched in hiding, they heard the war-whoops of the invaders, the howling of dogs, the uproar of challenge and defiance in turn ; faintly at first, from afar ; then distinctly, as the battle spread wide over their heads. They shuddered at the thump of stone mauls on the split-cedar planks of their houses, the peals of invectives, and on every side the din of blows, incessant and deadly.

Their hearts harboured no hope for victory. Numbers above valour told in a fray of man pitted against man ; and no one in those days would rely wholly upon the unseen Powers of nature for redress in adversity. Keemelay was doomed from the outset. In the teeth of defeat its contenders fought grimly for their lives, for the defence of their homes and their ancestral hunting-grounds abroad. All in vain, alas! Before sunset they had fallen to the last.

There travelled through the air at sunset a clamour of victory, the war-chant of Kunradal exultant. Succeeded with fatal progress the crackling of fire overhead, the acrid smell of burning cedar, the rumbling of corner posts and roof-beams sinking to the floor ; then stillness, that of death and extinction. Only ruins remained on the defaced terraces of Keemelay, and terror below,

n the bosoms of mother and daughter abandoned to heir fate in a wasted homeland.

A dirge song arose as a protest to the sky late that night. It carried its strains far and aloft, from a lonely shore. It was Pearl-labret's last farewell upon the ashes of all that she had loved and worshipped. "O people of Keemelay, how crushing your defeat, how utter my despair! Where are you all, that no one should respond to my call? Yet, you know me, you hear the sound of my voice, from the hills where the last of you may have fled; nay, from the clouds above, where your ghosts now wander aimless, unavenged. Listen to me, live or dead, listen to your sister, your mother, your blood! Here am I, in distress untold! Algyah, algyah, algyah!"

The echo of her complaint leaped from shore to shore; then faintly, into the feast-house of Kunradal yonder. It halted for a while the flow of the warriors' overnight revelry. "Hark, a ghost!" exclaimed with mirth the heirs-to-chiefs playing a game of *rsan* inside the front door. "A ghost, the ghost of Keemelay!"—"Hush, be silent!" ordered the elders at the rear. "What think you, O reckless game-players, so to invite on us all the wrath of ghosts crying for revenge in the sky?" And the ghost-song of Keemelay went on, as if from above:

"Here am I in distress, your mother, mourning your loss, O hunters of Keenamauk! Fearlessly you perished, war-club in hand, avenging your elder brother with loyal hearts; fearlessly you perished, all of you, for taking the life of a traitor to him, of the Kunradal rover in his deed of shame at night! And still, must your memory remain unavenged, and your souls forever be lost? Algyah, algyah, algyah!

"How bitter my complaint, how utter my despair, O Sun, Moon, Spirits that travel on high night and day!

Must you see Keemelay lie in its ashes, and let its hunting-grounds be ransacked? Must there be no law in the land, no posterity to my daughter Skawah, no posterity for a morrow and a new awakening? Must there be only an end, O Powers above, algyah, algyah, algyah!"

"Who Will Marry My Daughter Skawah?"



THE two mourners of Keemelay, from the season of snow to that of thawing winds, wandered between their hidden food stores in the hills and the ruins of their winter village at Temlaham. They wandered and all hope in time wasted away in their souls. None of their kinsmen would answer their calls, for only ghosts were left to wail amid the clouds, and the Sky spirits not once responded to their dirges, ever rehearsed and ever lost in the empty spaces of winter and desolation.

A strange feeling beset Skawah in the *kwahyam* season, under the breath of the warm breeze from the south-west, a feeling that incessantly grew out of her inner heart. She could no longer follow her elder down the trails of sorrow and despair. While the mother blackened her face, nursed her grief and rent the sky with her laments, her daughter wiped her tears and washed the ashes off her countenance. With the awakening of song-birds and the bursting of buds in the bush, she cast off the tatters which one must wear while in mourning, and bathed her body in the clear water from the hill-side springs. She made herself a dress from the skins of wild rabbits and a hood from ermine pelts white as the snow. More beautiful and glowing in her youth she grew under the rays of the spring sun every day, in the month of opening leaves.

Her mother oft cried out to her, "Why are you thus straying away from me, my child? I no longer hear you

sigh and mourn by my side?" And her daughter would reply, "Spring is come at last, O mother!"—"Of what avail the spring, fair maiden, of what avail to us, who must bemoan our downfall to the end of our lives!" —"Wipe your tears, mother, that you may see with your eyes! The moon of salmon has risen, and the fish now run upstream, the spring salmon and all the other kinds we are wont to secure for our sustenance."—"Why mind the salmon, why think of food for us, daughter so distracted, whose brothers fret for revenge in the sky-vault all seasons of the year?"

"Mother, mother, must your eyes without cease be shedding tears? Must you forever live in despair? Have we not mourned long enough? *Hawahlu* is past, the moon of taboos, wherein our duty was to abstain from food and beverage; the spring is come, and with it the days for a suitor's courting. . . ." The mother exclaimed, "Who shall ever be a suitor to my offspring in a land so forlorn!"—"Who are they if not suitors," pleaded Skawah, "the beings in my visions at dawn, the beings that awaken me in many guises—like ants, like birds, like animals in the woods?" Her mother pondered, "How strange your words, daughter dear, how strange to me! Suitors from among the living beings they cannot be; our land is void, but for enemies." And, wiping her tears, she added, "Let it be so, then—suitors from the Spirit-world, *narnauks* unseen in daylight but ever present beyond sight in the sky, in the forests, the lakes, the hill-tops, everywhere! The only ones forsooth now worthy of attention. Let it be so, I say, for our blood-revenge upon a cursed race of men, and the resurrection of Keemelay from its ashes!"

For the first time in many moons they moved on, at the dawn, to the hunting ground of Kunidzeeh, where

the water leaps like a caribou from rock to rock in a waterfall. Said Skawah to her sorrowful escort, "Dress me as a bride, for the coming of him who will help avenge my brothers." Her mother dressed her daughter in white, pulled down the hood over her face, and held her in her arms the while. "Who will come to me," she cried, "who will marry my only daughter Skawah—*Nadem anaksul kulkwe Skawah?*" And she waited, keeping her daughter's face in her bosom; she waited till sunset. At night she enquired, "Have you seen him, maiden, the suitor of your dreams?" But her daughter stood despondent; no one had appeared, no one in any guise. "O daughter," the old mother sighed, "are you ever to meet with good fortune, ever to wed in Spiritland for your salvation?"

"Dress me as a bride . . ." again begged Skawah at daybreak. Her mother yielded once more to her entreaty, and cried out, weeping incessantly, "Who will marry my daughter Skawah? *Nadem anaksul* . . ." The twigs rustled in the bush, and a voice came forth, a man's voice, "It is I, your son-in-law!" The old woman of Keemelay stared haggardly, as if blind, for her eyes were filled with tears. At last she perceived a human form, standing like a shadow, close by, in the dusk. It was her daughter's first suitor—perhaps the least engaging of all. He was small, ugly, repellent; and in truth, ants seemed to crawl in swarms over his body. "*Hlems*, son-in-law," enquired the mother, "tell me your name, that I may know!" His answer was, "Ant is my name, Ant from the ant-hills of Kunidzeeh."—"What could you do, son-in-law, in a fight with our enemies? Show me your power." The suitor at once ran back and forth excitedly, saying, "I smite the ankles of berry-pickers in the wild fruit patches." And the women felt a pain like an insect bite

at the ankle. "Go away," cried Skawah's escort, "go away, puny monster of Kunidzeeh! You are only mocking at a widowed mother in her quest for a son-in-law." And the vision disappeared, as if nothing had really happened but the rustling of the wind in the new leaves.

As the sun rose again, the two women sat expectant in the hazel shrubs of Shegunya creek, wherein the steelhead salmon spawns in the spring. "Who will marry my daughter Skawah?" cried the mother, pressing her daughter's face to her bosom. And she repeatedly uttered the same invitation for a suitor to come, "Who will marry her—*nadem anaksul kulkwe* . . . ?" A tuneful voice presently responded, "It is I, your son-in-law?"—"Tell me your name!"—"The Wren am I, whose abode is the hazel shrubs of Shegunya."—"Wren, my young friend," requested Skawah's mother, as she dried her tears and tried to catch a glimpse of him, "what could you do in a battle with our foes? Show me your might." The newcomer, whose motions indeed were like those of a bird on the limbs of a tree, pulled the old woman's hairs in his beak, one by one. "That will never do. Hop along, little stranger! Be off, I warn you, and leave me to my sorrow." The being that forthwith departed was a man; yet, his garb was bird-like, and so his demeanour. The Wren himself perhaps was he in person, the spirit-self; the *narhnauk* of all wrens on the hazel terraces of the Skeena.

So it happened day after day, in the moon of opening leaves. The fugitives would sit together in the woods about Shegunya, sighing and calling for another suitor. Young men not a few appeared to them in visitations at dawn, the young men whose names were Hummingbird, Sparrow, Robin, Mocking-bird, Blue-jay, Woodpecker, Grouse, and sundry others of the same tribe, whose

attire consists of feathers. "*Hlems*, what do you know about the ways of killing man?" Skawah's mother enquired of them all. One replied, "I fly and pick at the eyes of my enemy, making him blind. When he is blind, what more can he do? Therein is my power!" Another boasted, "I fly so fast, an enemy can never catch me." Still another, "I pierce my enemy's body with my sharp beak, thus," and he darted at a tree, scattering the bark and digging a hole of his own size. The mother would declare, "Son-in-law," out of respect, and add, "you may depart, when it is your pleasure. What I want is not a son-in-law who will make our foes blind, who will hurt them, or simply outrun them in the chase. No, it is an avenger who will bring retaliation into the very heart of Kunradal, an avenger fearless and mighty."

Then appeared, on successive mornings, the more powerful suitors in feathered garb, Hawk, Raven and Eagle. "I will marry your daughter Skawah," screeched the boisterous Eagle, as he pounced upon a stump behind the women in their retreat. "Son-in-law, what would you do in the presence of an enemy?" enquired the mother. "I am fierce," he declared, "the fiercest of my kind." Thereupon he ripped up the ground around the stump, captured a rabbit, tore it to shreds, and swallowed its entrails at a gulp. "Son-in-law, I dread your might," confessed the maiden's keeper. "Deadly are your weapons." And she hardly dared dismiss him for fear of arousing his temper.

The survivors of Keemelay in their distress resumed their migration up the river, and stopped before daybreak at the brook of Larsendzihl, where the mountain trout spawn in vast numbers. The mother, shedding endless tears cried out, "*Nadem anaksul kulkwe Skawah*—Who



QAWM, "COVETOUS PERSON",
A chief of Kitsalas, the Canyon tribe

By Edwin H Holgate

will marry my daughter Skawah?" She listened for an answer, which soon came from behind the foliage. "It is I! Here I stand."—"Son-in-law, who are you?"—"Squirrel is the name I was given long ago."—"Then, what are your means of attack, son-in-law?"—"Up and down the tree trunks and away into the branches in a riot I tear, making a fearful noise. Thus I scare the villains away." And Squirrel forthwith displayed his agility on the nearest tree. But it was for naught, racket and gambols all. She sent him away with the word, "Little four-legged friend, a warrior you shall never be, only a boaster. Be off, at your pleasure!"

Another young man, at the usual call, walked up to her the following day, saying, "Look at me! what would you think of me for your daughter's husband?" His name was Rabbit, whose dwellings are the Larsendzhil caverns. "What will you do when our enemy once more swarms across the river to attack Keemelay?"—"I will turn my face to him, open my eyes wide, O so wide! and thus frighten him away for good. That is what I have in mind to do!"—"Do not be deceived, round-faced one. Your bulging eyes would afford us not the least protection. My son-in-law you shall never be." The suitor dropped his head, shyly taking his leave. When he vanished in the bush, it was a rabbit that jumped away and hid in a tunnel underground.

Mink, Beaver, Marmot, Land-Otter, Porcupine, Caribou, Wolf, Black-bear, and others whose names are after quadrupeds, volunteered their good-will; fine swimmers were they, industrious workers not a few, and self-reliant hunters. One and all they stood for the leading tribes in the wilderness. Skawah's mother heard their boasts

day after day, through the moon of *maa-i*, when the berries ripen, and the moon of salmon at the headwaters. Yet as the summer waned, the best of them had failed in the ultimate test, the test of blood-revenge against the unconquered people of Kunradal on the Skeena.

The fugitives moved up in despair to the dark canyon of the Ksan, at the opening of the grizzly-bear moon. "Who will ever marry my daughter Skawah?" endlessly cried the mother, until she gasped out of breath, almost at the point of death. A large man crashed through the dry limbs of trees, saying, "I will marry her!"—"Let it be so, son-in-law! But first tell me your name ; show me your might."—"Under the name of Medeek, Grizzly-bear, must you know me," he growled, tearing up a stump with one hand, and scattering the dust in the air. He dropped out of sight, soon to return with two heads dripping with blood from his mouth. The most ferocious of all beings was he in the valley, who would instil fear into the heart of the bravest. Yet, vast as was his strength, it surged forth beyond control ; and his temper brooked no obstacle. The maiden trembled with fear, and her mother mustered the courage to refuse him. "Our enemies are too many," she pleaded; "you cannot behead them all with your teeth." So he went on his way through the bushes, seemingly changing into a huge bear as he disappeared.

Danger now there was, danger imminent, for no mother through mere ambition should forever ignore all suitors to a daughter; danger from starvation as well; the season of *sint*, of warm weather, fast drew to an end, leaving the wanderers in the forest without shelter, without food, helpless and disconsolate. Still Skawah stood every day with her hood down, bemoaning, "O mother,

am I truly to die a maiden?" And her mother would cry, as if fatally, "*Nadem anaksul kulkwe Skawah?*"

Her complaint in the end rose above the tumult of foaming waters, above the tall trees of the canyon and still higher, into the clouds that travel in the season of falling leaves. A storm broke out of a sudden, tore away the tree tops, and uprooted pines and cedars on all sides. A voice from behind resounded like a peal of thunder, "Here am I, your daughter's husband." Awe-struck, the mother barely could venture, "Who are you, son-in-law?"—"Who am I? My name is Baasu—Storm. You know me well. The rain drips from my lap, and whenever I breathe, the wind soars and the beasts run for cover below." So uproarious were his flurries that no further answer could reach their ears. At the seeming refusal of the woman dumb with fright, he flew into a rage and swept down the river, leaving behind him a train of fallen leaves and devastation. So it happened in a vision at sunrise, among the foaming waters of the Ksan and the broken pillars of dark rocks which we still see there nowadays.

The Sky country, which rests on the blue vault a very short distance above the mountain peaks moved down imperceptibly, the night that followed Baasu's visitation. At daybreak, it alighted on the earth, as the rays of the sun shot through the Eastern Gate with a flood of bright light. Skawah's mother now was moaning in agony, "Who will marry my daughter Skawah, before I die?"

Raising her face to the sky, she gasped—for she was about to breath her last from sorrow and exhaustion, "*Nadem anaksul kulkwe Skawah?*" A faint melody greeted her ear, as if from the throats of numberless warblers in the foliage of distant trees. Only that. Four times

ıe repeated, "*Nadem anaksul* . . . ;" and the same /arbling responded to her last appeal. A flash of light-ing then whipped her face, and the ground quaked under ıer feet. There now stood in front of her a being unlike ny other on earth. So dazzled was she by the light, hat she fell into a swoon, and for a while could not see he stranger standing in front of her, whose garments were like tongues of fire and whose face was as radiant ıs the Sun when he rises in the eastern sky. A voice glowing like that of warblers in the saskatoon bushes spoke softly to her ear, "Woman of the Ksan, why are you forever crying, forever calling?" She answered, "My people have died, the people of Keemelay, all, save the daughter I clasp in my arms. They have perished at the hands of Kunradal across the river." The stranger said, "How do I pity you, whose lament has reached my father's ear in the Sky, and disturbed his sleep for many moons!" She went on sobbing her dirge song, "Our enemies have burnt our houses to the ground, have mocked at the ghosts of our people in the clouds of the air, ruined our homes in Temlaham and ransacked our hunting-grounds at Keenamauk, the sacred possessions which our ancestors in the days of yore handed down to us for safe-keeping ; they have ruined us utterly, ruined all, O *narhnauk* whose name is still unknown to me!" The heavenly visitor declared, "My name is Sunbeams, the offspring of the Sun. And my father commands that I marry your daughter." The Sun's eldest child was he forsooth, whose *halla-it* of pearl shells and ermine skins shone like a crown of bright rays around his head, and the fringes of whose Chilkat robe spread about his feet on the earth like a flood of consuming light. "Almighty

must you be, O Spirit of the Sky!" murmured the Keemelay woman. "May I know the manner of your might?"

Sunbeams lifted his staff, which turned into a bow, and, adjusting to its string a beam from his headdress, he instantly released a shaft of lightning into the abysses of the Ksan. "Mother," cried Skawah, frightened in her mother's bosom, "O mother, how awful!"—"Spirit of the Sky," enquired the maiden's keeper, "what else can you do for my daughter and her posterity?" Sunbeams departed, at once to reappear with a house post on his shoulder, which he planted in the ground. Four posts did he thus establish at the four corners; and the walls in between and the roof above did he erect out of his hands, until a new house stood there in the morning glow. He squeezed sparks and flames out of two lumps of flint, which he picked up at his feet. As he dropped them inside the house through the smoke hole, a fire burnt within, which was never extinguished, and the smoke rose like a ladder of prosperity through an opening in the sky vault. "Son-in-law" declared the mother, "what will you do when our enemies swarm over the ice to destroy Keemelay once more?"—"Very mighty is the Sun above," declared Sunbeams. All things on earth are overturned when he turns over at night. And from him solely do I derive my power in the world." Drawing a *tsa-urh*, a small wooden casket, from under his shining garment, he walked off a few paces down the slope, and waved it in his hand. The ground shook woefully. Then he turned it sideways. The earth began to turn over, a rock slide crashing into the waters of the Ksan below. "Stop, stop!" cried the anguished mother. "Here is my daughter, *hlems*, son-in-law! May the ghosts of my people at last be avenged, may the tribe of Keemelay be reborn of its ashes!"

unbeams



UNBEAMS lifted the flaps of his Chilkat robe as a bird opens its wings, thus uncovering his *gus-yani*, his garment of mink ; for the Sun was already climbing his path upwards, and the sky had resumed its lofty seat on the blue vault above. "The time is come," said he, "for our journey to my father's lodge in Sky-land." Under is right arm he placed his bride Skawah, and under his ft, her care-worn mother, urging, "Let us now travel omewards with the Sun along his trail! As we journey ou must keep your eyes closed, must not be distracted t the cries that rend the air and the laments that arise rom the four corners of the earth. Mind my words, he words of Sky command!"

The matron of Keemelay felt that she was flying through he air, away from the murmur of the waters and the vind in the mountain gorges. Meanwhile, she remained it heart a creature of the past, without faith in the morrow. Her belief in the coming of an avenger failed her in the est. Her life withal was drawing near the end of its pan. Startled at the cries around her that grew every moment more distressing, she drew the veil from her face, and glanced openly into the luminous space which no mortal eye might contemplate. And forsooth she fell back with her daughter and son-in-law to the starting-point of their endeavours, on earth. So it happened,

the first time she journeyed in the sky, under Sunbeams' magic garment of mink pelts.

Twice more did Sunbeams warn his earthly mates before rising through the air, twice again to tumble with them downwards, for like breach of faith and loyalty. The ghostly noises in the sky distracted the matron; she looked out in spite of herself through the least openings, the peg-holes in her son-in-law's Chilkat garment.

"My father is waiting for us in his house above; we cannot tarry longer on the trail," confided Sunbeams to his bride, as they fell downwards a fourth time. "I will grant your mother another existence, one that will never end. For at her age she cannot relinquish her people's earthly abode, where she has laboured a lifetime."

His mother-in-law should not be left unsheltered in her solitude. He pulled out a granite slab from the mountain side, to lodge her in the crevices. But she was too cramped within ; she gasped at the point of death. He conveyed her, instead, to a large cedar and declared, "Her new life is my gift to her. Unlike her people, she will never die." He pulled off a limb of the tree, and sat her inside the knot, readjusting forthwith the branch in its socket. Then he comforted his bride, who began to mourn her mother's loss. "Be consoled, O Skawah!" he said. "The forest shall hereafter be your mother's abode. The people on earth live and die. They slaughter each other. Not so the trees of the valleys and the hillsides. One falls, another stands up. They endure forever. Thus shall it be with your mother's life. The travellers will always remember her in their wanderings abroad. O Skawah, be consoled!"

The maiden, before departing for Sky-land with her suitor, once more heard her mother sigh in the tree. She

ırd her sigh and moan and cry in turn, as the cedar ughs yielded to the breeze. While she listened, the ice passed from tree to tree, until the whole forest, ıving in the wind, hooted like the blue grouse in the ring, laughed merrily in the summer, and at times oaned and creaked as we still hear it at every season of e year. That is how the maiden's mother has lived to is day, chatting with the hunters along the trails, and udly chaffing as a storm breaks in the woods. Whenever e hear the voice of the trees in the wind, we acknowledge, It is your mother-in-law;" or perchance, if so prompted, e say, "Put her in a knot hole!"

Skawah was facing a large feast-house, that of the ead-chief, when she opened her eyes to the bright light hat perpetually shines in the ancient village of Lahay ın high. She overheard two men speaking inside, "My hild, were you successful in your quest? Have you brought ɔack the maiden whose mother never ceased lamenting ıer dead?"—"The maiden stands in front of your lodge, O father!" answered a voice familiar to her ears, that of ıer supernatural guide in the sky. The chief said, "Let us rejoice, O my son! for her virtues were unsurpassed among the maidens in the land beneath us. Convey her within, that I may contemplate her beauty and descry in her heart the real meaning of her existence."

Sunbeams forthwith reappeared to her, saying, "The Sun that incessantly travels the world now sits near the door of sunrise, and invites you to come to the rear of his lodge." As she walked into the house of daylight with her head drooping she was greeted, "Welcome to my

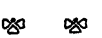
daughter from among the people, welcome! The cedar mat will be your seat in my presence!" And she fell down prostrate on the mat which a huge slave had spread in front of her at his master's bidding.

Then took place the *wasin* ceremonial, wherein a bride is presented with new robes to don. The Sun chief bade, "Give her the robes of wolf fur white and soft, which grandmother Uwatseets has sewn for her." Casting a glance upon her, as she graced her bridal costume, he felt happy in his glory. His son's was in truth the fairest and most privileged of all brides, whose life made redress possible, redress for a wrong and blood-revenge upon defiant violators of equity on earth.

Again the chief commanded his slave, "Place the twin mats before my children;" and to his son, "Sit down beside your bride, my daughter-in-law, whom the people of Keemelay called Skawah in their lifetime." Sunbeams sat as he was bid, thus accepting unto himself the human bride whom he had rescued in the trials of her adversity. And there was joy in the land of perpetual light.

The Sun father, progressing to the center of his lodge at the hour of *weesah*, directed his slave, "Now present my children with the food; they are hungry." And a dish of toasted salmon was laid at their feet, of which they partook at midday. "Place the *kwa-umtee* before them, the bear meat dried in the sun," he ordered at the hour of *yuhs*, as he sat on the threshold of the western door. While they feasted on it, there were rejoicings again in their abode. The rays of the Sun turned red in the clouds and beamed at the gate of sunset. The blossoms of the wild briars and the fireweed basked in the evening glow, breathing their sweet scent abroad, as in the spring of the

And the Sky-husband now departed with his
ɜ for his home, the lodge that stood next to his father's
ıe ancient village of Lahay on high.



Sunbeams accompanied Skawah to the rear of his house,
seated her on a couch by the fire-place. Parting with
forthwith, he lay down beyond the fire and covered
limbs with a bearskin, the fur of which was dark
l bushy like the shades of night. And the long shafts
wning the Sun sank one by one under the edge of the
-vault to the west.

Her face shrouded in the folds of her raiment, Skawah
ıged for the coming of her lover to her side ; she longed
d sighed from *laskeh* after twilight to *mesaih* before
ybreak. Yet, he never appeared, never drew off her
il the while! As she ventured a glance at last, she saw
orb of light floating in mid-air outside the eastern door,
d sunbeams dancing about her, playing with her fondly,
awing in their trail songs mellow like those of warblers
the foliage of trees. In a trance she threw her arm
ɔen, greeting the rays of the sun; she felt the happiest
all creatures in the world of living beings.

The vision soon passed out of sight; with it, the
ɔultation of her heart. She ran out of the lodge in
ɹrsuit, trying to recapture it, and followed the trail
ıtil she halted at the spring of Maudeks, where a cascade
/hite like the sap of milkweeds perpetually leaps out of
ıe ground. After she had bathed in the waters, she began
ɔ weep as a new bride after parting for the first time
ɔom her beloved. She wept to herself by the fountain.

A faint voice hailed her from below, "Lend me an
ar, grand-daughter, and tell me why you are lonesome?"

Skawah answered, "Grandmother, must you know? May I learn how you are called, who thus addresses me from nowhere?"—"Uwatseets—Call-of-grandmother—is my name; my abode is the tunnels that riddle the earth." The wisdom of Uwatseets is a by-word; her advice, an unfailing boon. Mindful of it, Skawah knelt down, broke open the turf with her hands, thus laying bare a round opening at her feet.

A white mouse ran out of it into the shrubs, thereabouts to change into an old woman, puny and decrepit with age. She said, "You are in need of comfort, grandchild; you are aggrieved. But first grace my craving for a trifle to unravel with my hands, I pray!"

Pouncing upon the tassels of cedar-bark skirt which Skawah tendered her, the apparation tore them to shreds, as a mouse does when nibbling at a piece of smoked salmon perchance fallen to her lot. Then she cast the remains behind, enquiring, "Why are you so downhearted, granddaughter? You live in this home of plenty, and your husband is the Sun's only child in person. . . . Are you longing for him while he is journeying far away? Now, remember that he never tarries long in his path; he must as ever follow the footsteps of his father, holding in his hands the round disk of fire that brings daylight everywhere in the sky above and on the earth beneath us. Just one 'turn over', the space of a night, and he will re-enter the gate of sunrise, not in human garb—for never is he thus to reappear before your eyes—, but undisguised, like his true self, Sunbeams, in whose embrace all things to the smallest thrive in the world. When he returns to his lodge and his beams again dance merrily about your body, greet him with joy and love. Remember only this, that you are wedded to the rays of the Sun. Do not wander far afield or otherwise take your fate in your hands, for

r own salvation and the sake of those whose lives ly matter—the children you will bear to him, whose y shall be to restore custom and equity in the lawless ntry of Temlaham on the Skeena."

Skawah once more felt lonesome in her heart, after : departure of Sunbeams, the next day. While she hed in the white waters of Maudeks, she cried for an-ish and hunger. She had partaken of no food since r nuptial meal in the lodge of the Sun chief. Crying, e met on her way the huge slave of Lahay, whose func-on it is to procure food for all in his care. And he otioned her to follow him a few paces, to the Well of ckness and Death.

There he stooped and removed a stone slab covering a ell, wherein he descended with the help of his spear and rope of twisted cedar bark. Then, aiming straight, he eared a live being and cast it outside with a jerk, as a sherman does the salmon at the edge of the canyon. he being now lying near the rim was no food to her, in uth, but a human body, that of a man stricken by death f a sudden while still in full health.

Looking down into the well, as if from an opening in ne sky vault, Skawah stood amazed at the wondrous ight below, an endless expanse of mountains and forests nd rivers. She perceived a village in the distance, many ouses, and—smaller still—living beings moving in throngs ike ants, yet not unlike men and women, moving and vorking and dancing as will happen among the people on earth.

The slave coming out of the well, cleansed his prey in clear water, desembowelled it and threw open the side of his master's lodge where human bodies are cremated after death. Red hot stones from the fire-place he piled high in the cavity, laying the body on the funeral pyre

and covering it with live coals and resinous woods that shot flames and thick smoke upwards. Thus did Skawah first learn of the ceremony of cremation, which ever after was to be the rule among her people.

At dawn, the slave scraped off the ashes and retrieved as an offering to his masters the charred limbs within, depositing them near the door of sunrise in a box that resembled a food tray for distinguished guests at a feast. The Sun and his beams entered the house at daybreak, and brushed past the holocaust without halting. They did not partake of the fruits of death and decay, life being their offspring in the world. Not so with their giant slave, who sat down by himself to a gruesome banquet after their departure.

The vision of death brought torture to the lone survivor of Keemelay, who could no longer allay her distress in her solitude. And she greeted her adviser Uwatseets, who emerged a second time from the bushes near the fountain of Maudeks. "Grandchild," enquired the ancient visitor, "why so dismayed and so fearful?" Skawah confessed her grief, "The slave has served food to me, O grandmother, the food that looks like the very bodies of my people."—"Dispel your alarm, for all danger is now past: you would not sit with him to the banquet of death. The Chief of the Sky, O child, only wanted to reveal to you how death happens to man. His slave is no other than sickness and death, who feasts upon the living beings falling to his hands, who bears respect to no one alive, young or old, ailing or healthy, for he knows but one thing—his own greed endless and unrestrained."

Uwatseets, whose ways are those of life itself, thereupon conveyed her friend to the rear of the chief's house, saying, "Here are the hoards of all foods. They are meant for your use, and you may now eat to your delight."

ıd she spread before her rolls of dried soapberries and her fruits hardened in cakes for preservation, goat meat red in the sun, and smoked trout and salmon in stacks ı all sides.

Ere the new moon, a momentous change occurred in cawah's existence. She knew that within her bosom welt souls other than her own, souls reborn for a posterity ıd the redemption of her lineage now fallen upon evil ays in the vale of Temlaham. And she conjured in er mind the memories of old, singing to herself the irge inherited from her mother's lips:

"O people of Keemelay, where are you all, that no ne should respond to my call? Yet, you know me, ou hear the sound of my voice, from the clouds where our ghosts now wander aimless, unavenged. Listen o me, live or dead, listen to your sister, your blood! Here am I, in distress untold! Algyah, algyah, algyah!"

A son was born to her when the new moon appeared uspended above, her first child begot from the rays of unshine. Her heart surged in exultation at his coming; ınd the Sun, breaking through the eastern gate, beamed ıs never before in the sky. They were happy and proud, for the open ways of life had triumphed at last, triumphed over all obstacles that swarm everywhere under cover.

The grandfather took it upon himself to rear his grandson and make him worthy of his calling among the people. He would hold him every morn in his arms, gaze complacently into his face, bathe him in the milky fountain of Maudeks at dawn, and stretch his limbs one by one, thus inducing rapid growth ; until, at the *kuhlar-rantu*—the half moon—the child stood on his feet and walked for the first time around his father's lodge.

Still, Skawah lived all by herself with her child, as the days went by, never even catching a glimpse of her

husband in his human form. She would only perceive a faint glimmer of light around the edges of the bearskin on his couch at night. But she always greeted with fervour the coming of day, as of her own beloved by her side, and the rays of the Sun likewise renewed their visitations ever more lovingly.

Again at the new moon she gave birth to a child, a second son, whom the grandfather also took under his care, holding him in his arms, bathing him and stretching his limbs four times every day. And so it came to pass that Skawah bore to her heavenly husband another child every new moon, till there throve four sons and two daughters, six in all.

The grandfather, when bathing the youngest of his grand-daughters in the fountain of Maudeks, drew her limbs out, and she grew fast, like the fireweeds in the spring of the year. Yet, fond as he was of her, he never lost sight of the moment when Skawah's progeny would fulfill a mission on earth. For a purpose he stretched her limbs out unevenly on both sides, making her a cripple from the age of adolescence, so that her infirmity would incite beholders to laughter and cruel mockery.

The time for puberty training had arrived, when the heirs of the Keenamauk hunters must learn the ways of war and peace as they prevail among fellow-beings. To their grandfather they turned for guidance, as the children of the people naturally turn to their maternal uncles, the source of all traditional wisdom. And the Sun ancestor lavished upon his human family the gifts and powers that would soon restore Keemelay to its former seat on the banks of the Skeena.

To his grandsons he revealed sundry crafts ; first of all, that of the chase. He imparted to them a clear insight

:o the nature of animals, hardened them through labour d climbing and prolonged vigils, and taught them how erect fish fences and weirs in the rivers and to spear lmon at the edges of the canyons. He also showed ıem other essential arts, those of making canoes, building ɔuses, and providing food and shelter for their own ımilies wherever they happen to venture at all seasons f the year. His grand-daughters he trained in domestic ursuits, which appertain solely to women in every ousehold.

Then occurred the memorable promulgation which ɔrever must be the rule for mankind. "Here are the vords of my command for the welfare of all," he said, 'the words of the first precept. Do not abuse animals or idicule them. Their lives are not unlike yours. Their ;pirit-selves, unless propitiated, stand over them in readiıess for the deed of retaliation. Do not waste their lesh or scatter their bones. Above all, spare their broods, est they visit their wrath upon you and migrate from your ıunting territories, leaving them barren and desolate :or your own ruin."

The next precept bore on the duties of fasting and abstinence, before all leading events in adolescence or maturity, throughout a lifetime. "The man who never seeks restraint shall never know endurance and fortitude; he shall never have visions of the spirit world, never grasp the dictates of unseen wisdom."

Reverence to the dead, whoever they be, was the object of the third command. "For the dead survive as ghosts, dwelling for a time in the air above their former habitations, and they may cause injury to the living. Mourn their loss, however lightly, cremate their remains and

lay them on trees, that their souls may journey abroad and cross the river of sighs in the end."

The last of the four rules that stand like the corner posts of a house concluded with the word of truth: "The Sun is your father and the Sky his abode. Life is his seed and growth his daily concern. Beware lest you spoil his work and mar the beauty of his creation. Never laugh tauntingly to his face, for you owe respect to him. Else, you court your own doom; else, you conjure the downfall of your tribe and its final dispersion in the wastes of the wilderness."

A *Sky-Born Progeny*



KAWAH'S children had come of age, and with the revival of nature in the spring, the day for their migration homewards drew nigh. The Sun grandfather one morning conveyed them to the ritual of power endowment in his lodge, the ritual which must grace the advent of adults into manhood.

The eldest of his grandsons he called to the rear of the house, thus addressing him, "The name of Daran-wilget henceforth shall be your possession. In your hands shall reside the power to kill game and smite your challengers in war. Woe to your enemies, for yours is the might of your supernatural father!" And he delivered unto him, with a quiver of arrows, the *belham hakutak*, a bow made of yew and inlaid with opalescent shells from the bottom of the sea.

Then he summoned Skawah's second son, investing him with a magical gift for life, the sling with which to shoot death at will. "Your name shall be Laylem-kry, Sling-shot, and your enemies will tremble at your sight, for your blows kill and never miss the mark."

He called his third grandson by the name of Amdee-sem, Hitting-fist, saying, "Yours shall be the faculty of slaying man or beast with one blow of the fist." Dismissing him, he touched his hand and hardened it into stone, like a hammer.

Ligi-yuwen, Left-handed, is the title which he conferred upon the last of Skawah's sons, and he declared, "*Harallarh*, the War-club, shall be your weapon of defence

and attack in warfare. Small as it is, it crushes life and accomplishes marvels untold."

To his grand-daughters he gave their names: Weelauran, to the elder; to the younger—the cripple—Ksemanhaym. And he made it known that they would henceforth be proficient in the art of rescuing the fallen and healing their wounds on the battlefields.

Like all other men on earth, Skawah's sons must master the game of *rsan*; for they would sit on the mat ere long, and guess for a stake at the winning markets, in response to challenge. Their grandfather therefore presented them with a set of ivory markers inlaid with abalone pearls, and initiated them into the tricks of seasoned gamblers, saying, "The time is coming when you shall play *rsan* with your enemies across the river."

Skawah's thoughts again dwelt upon the shades of the past, as in her mother's lifetime. She wailed at the memories of old, now revived with bitterness, and instilled into her children's bosoms the one passion for retaliation in kind that rules all stout hearts. She recounted to them the former glories of Keemelay, named one after another the domains that would have been their inheritance, the fishing stations and the hunting-grounds once owned by their uncles—Keenamauk, the Lakes of the beaver dams; Larandahl, the Heights of the berry bushes; Ksa-weegwans, the Stream of the large spring; Tsetamks, the Head of the pond; Anuh-leguh, the Home of bears, and how many more for their sorrow and humiliation.

With them she rehearsed the dirges of ancient days: "Son, my eldest son! Oh, the grief in Pearl-labret's heart!" or, at other times, "Here am I in distress, mourning your loss, O hunters of Keenamauk! Perished you fearlessly, war-club in hand; perished you all for taking the life of a traitor to your brother, the life of the Kunradal

er in his deed of shame at night! Still, must your mory remain unavenged, and your souls for ever be t? Algyah, algyah, algyah!"

The young warriors were then marshalled by their ındfather into a battle, a sham battle wherein, divided :o two parties, they faced each other as in earnest, d resorted to a decision by sheer force of arms. Daran-ilget first shot Andeesem with his bow of yew and the ound in the loin seemed deep and fatal. Ligi-yuwen ɔinted his war-club in the direction of Daran-wilget, nocking him unconscious, and avenging his brother. 'he sisters, one from each side, rushed to the rescue with ıeir ministrations. Ksemanhaym drew the arrow from ındeesem's loin and sucked out the blood. Intoning the ncantation, "*Hawalem kyortehl hawaulay* . . . Your en-my is using arrows of straw," she instantly healed her ɔrother and retrieved him for the battle line. Weelauran ın like wise chanted over Daran-wilget, "His *harallarh* is only a toy, not the real war-club in a fighter's hand." Thus went on the pretended onslaughts, the war chants and the medicine incantations, day after day, from dawn till sunset, and Sky-land rang out as a live battlefield, overrun by raiders and strewn with the bodies of fighters dying on every hand.

Skawah herself in the end could no longer endure the clamour and the incessant clash of arms under her eyes. Raising her arms at daybreak, she pleaded, "Sun that gives light, hearken to my entreaty, allay my distress! How long since has misfortune befallen my lineage and embittered my existence! How many seasons have the ghosts of my relatives drifted like logs in a flood, drifted on the aimless clouds of the air, moaning for a relief that has failed them since the day of their doom! Must our trials never lapse, and the tide of hope in our hearts wane

to naught in the end? O Sun that brings life and comfort and happiness to all in the world!"

"Daughter-in-law," replied the Sun unto her, "dry your tears and call your children back to the fold. The period of their training is now completed; they excell in earthly crafts and the deadly art of warfare. Let us rejoice! Before a day and a night are over, you will set foot with them on the desolate soil of Keemelay. The hour of reckoning for the spoliators of your homeland is at hand."

As a last endowment to the eldest of his grandsons, he erected for him a house of cedar on the heights facing his lodge, saying, "Its sacred name shall be Gus-tatkeeya —Garment come down (from the sky to shelter your lives). It shall belong to your posterity throughout the ages." And he painted human faces in red and yellow ochre around its walls for a symbol and a memorial.

Alongside he built the house of Gus-tarhl, Garment of Rainbow, the front of which he ornamented with the colours of the rainbow. He gave it to Sling-shot as his own crest and habitation.

To the third house he gave the name of Gus-piyals, Robe of Stars, and cut an opening above its front door, so that the outsiders would recognize the star as they went by, when the fire was lit inside at night, and say: "Here is Andeesem's Star-house."

The house of the fourth grandson received the name of Gus-kalsrait, Garment like the hat of Darkness, and its walls were decorated with dull brown faces representing shadows at night.

His grand-daughters received from his hands the lodges known henceforth as Tsenausu, the Caterpillar house, and Huktasneks, Rain falling like a mist while

ɜ sun shines; on their walls appeared the coloured pro-ɜs of caterpillars and of clouds pouring rain in showers.

The Sun father on the evening of the last day sat ɔwn to the Feast of Farewell with his daughter-in-law ıd his grandchildren. Presenting Skawah with a *kalenk*, tray full of small spoons made from the horns of the ıountain goat and the mountain sheep, he declared, This is the end of your last day in the Sky. You shall ɜ-enter the land of your destinies before dawn." For ıeir last meal together they partook of the fruit of the ʌild crab-apple, preserved in a food-box with the oil of he candle-fish.

"Offspring of the rays of my crown you are," he said o his grandchildren, "no less than of a race of mortals ıow all but extinct that once throve on the banks of the ɔkeena. When you fix your abode among the people that ive and die, it shall not be without a token of my pro-ɜection." Turning to the house of Daran-wilget he painted on its front a round disk in bright colour, saying, "Gyamk, the Sun, shall be the emblem of your posterity." Then he painted on the house-fronts of Sling-shot and Andeesem the signs that have remained their descendant's property to this day : Mahay and Piyals—the Rainbow and the Stars. Upon the left-handed Ligi-yuwen he conferred the Larhaum, the Sky-vault, with bird-like features that indicate noble extraction.

When it was accomplished, he uttered the memorable edict, "These shall be your crests to the end of time. The people at their sight will revere your presence and acknowledge your rights ; they will never forget how your souls were reborn in Sky-land, and how you avenged your uncles' memory in blood. Your duty shall be to establish in their midst the customs that henceforth must serve as a guidance in life. Remember my word:

Observe the law of the Sky, that you may thrive and be happy among the other tribes of man."

He presented them last of all with a magic box, the *tsa-urh* which in the hand of Sunbeams had caused an earthquake at the Ksan, saying, "You must resort to it but once, in the direst extremity, when you are on the verge of collapse at the hands of your enemies." And, bidding them farewell, he vanished in the west beyond the gate of Sunset.

Blood Revenge



THE young men of Kunradal were more than ever unruly and rash in their ways. They played *rsan* without cease. Their challenges and game-songs dinned not only throughout the day, but long after dark, in front of the houses under the very stars and moon above.

A white mist, one night, descended in sheets and imperceptibly thickened around them. As the sky and the earth nearly merged together at Temlaham, gamblers heard a report of rattling planks like that of the bones in a graveyard, and they wondered at the rumbling from the ruins across the river which in jest they had termed, "the ash heap of the mad villagers that makes no noise." Thus it happened when the house of Daran-wilget fell through a sky-opening and hit the site of the head-chief's lodge in the centre of Keemelay.

They again puzzled over the drum-like knocking of boards, when the lodges of the other brothers in turn slipped through the air and landed beside each other in a line. Their leaders dismissed all fear, declaring, "There is merely a rumble in the burial mound of the brave fighters without minds, of whom naught else remains behind to preserve their memory—merely a rumble!" Facing the river, one of them tauntingly enquired, "Why all that fuss without reason, O chatterers of Keemelay?" Others retorted with jeers, "There is ado over there, much ado; we must admit it! 'Tis that they have made



THE TOTEM POLE OF THE BEAR AND THE MOON,
At Kispayaks—the "Hiding-place"

By Emily Carr

up their minds to gather their possessions and move to other parts."

Awe-stricken at their impiety to the dead, the old men shuddered lest "the Chief of the Spirits on high should retaliate in his wrath." To no avail their warnings. Far from it, their nephews mocked only the more at the sounds now constantly echoing across the river, the sounds of hammering on wedges, as of house-builders splitting cedar logs into planks; nay, the beating of drums to a chant, faint at first, then louder, a dirge song forsooth, the song of the ghost of Keemelay itself, which they had heard the night of their victory. And in the end they even recognized the words which they could not fully understand, "Out of Larhay has emerged the town of the fearless ones."—"The souls of the dead have come back to life," declared the elderly leaders in dismay. "Beware, you fiends of the painted mat! It is peril that you have brought upon your home-town by your rashness. Oh, how do we fear the coming of day!"

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A thick fog still lingered in the valley long after the advent of daylight. It seemed too dense for the sun to swallow up, and began to scatter only late in the 'long span of day'. The Kunradal folk stood in their doorways, trying to discover the cause of the ghostly bustle which every hour grew more disquieting to the elders. At last they descried smoke beyond the river, yellow smoke rising in four lofty pillars as from four hearths still concealed behind a luminous white cloud. Long beams, faint and elusive like the northern lights, shot from the cloud, dancing along its edges in tufts more fleecy than the cotton of the fireweed. The mountain-side in the mist

ɨ the cloud over Keemelay radiated such dazzling ht at one moment that the whole forest seemed ablaze. t there was no crackling of flames, no trace of the smoke ıt curls in the wake of a forest fire.

Mysterious and fearful was it to behold. The game-ıyers, like the others, gazed with misgivings, but were ɔ vain to acknowledge their guilt, their wanton impiety, ll less to confess it openly before their incensed tribesmen, ung and old. Evil were they and impenitent in their arts. And to save their faces they kept up their taunts defiance of all, shouting, "The braves have come ck home, but what of it? Once before we defeated em, smashed their skulls and burnt their houses to cinders. hy should it be so soon forgotten? Dead ones over ɔnder, of what use are earthly dwellings to your manes? ɔu make a great noise, as if you were real. Do you ll wish to fight, O brave fools, erst our neighbours?"

A star, larger than any in the vault aloft, pierced e luminous haze and shed its light to the south; the ys of the sun burst out, as at daybreak, to one side the star; and the bright colours of a rainbow stood on d and scaled the blue depth. Lebleebam-larhay, the ɔrm bird of the firmament, swooped down from the ekyawden mountain peaks, and fluttered in circles. hen he bent his long beak into an arc and released a ısh of lightning into the radiant screen, tearing it asunder ith a clap of thunder. And the people of Kunradal held Keemelay resurrected for a portent.

There stood the new village close to the river bank, ılike any heretofore seen in Temlaham. Its large ɔmmunal houses, four altogether, shone in the opalescent ow of the waning *weesah*, before sunset. Oh, how novel was, how beautiful, how bewildering! The broad onts were adorned with strange signs in vivid colours.

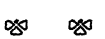
And the beholders, intently scanning them, recognized the emblems of celestial bodies: Gyamk—the Sun, Piyals—the Star, Mahay—the Rainbow, and Larhaum—the Sky-vault with a face like an eagle and a long beak bent back threateningly. Thus appeared the earliest crests ever known to man, so appalling in their magic, that ever since the people of the western watersheds have striven to obtain emblems of their own for mystic shields and the safeguards of their property rights wherever they be.

The vision of the heavenly bodies resting on earth utterly confounded the ancients of Kunradal. They hardly believed their eyes, or else dreaded the coming of the *narhnauks* whose abode is on high. "What will befall us," they exclaimed, "if the presence of the Sky spirits means punishment for the crimes of our nephews?" And, turning to the offenders, they gave vent to bitter reproach, "Stand and behold! This is what you have done, in spite of our warning, in spite of ancient wisdom, O you, unworthy sons of our sisters!"

Afraid though they were at heart, the gamblers retorted, raising their fists as weapons, "We are good fighters, the best the Ksan has ever known. No mortal can intimidate us, still less the ghosts of stray hunters whom we despised in their lifetime. And if the *narhnauks* themselves choose to defy us, well, let it be! We stand ready for the test."

The newcomers, if not seemingly human, behaved like ordinary people in their daily activities. They stepped out of their lodges, busily went back and forth in numbers —openings hidden in the side partitions between the houses, allowing them to reappear many times in the same doorways—not a few of them attired in unfamiliar garbs, the strangest of garbs, and striking gears on their heads. Slaves even they owned, since drudges tramped in turn

wn the river bank with square water buckets. Most zzling of all appeared a female spirit, powerful un-ubtedly as all of her kind, yet limping as an ordinary pple whose spine was distorted from child-birth. A pple though a spirit, and stumbling incredibly! How liculous, to the young jesters of Kunradal always prone break into merriment! And they laughed openly, lling her "Ksemlauks—the Sun-female", a nickname, insult for the very daughter of Sunbeams, born and ed in the land of perpetual light.



The neighbours would not yet fraternize, the next .y. Kunradal stood on its guard, and for valid cause, hile the smoke from the roofs of new Keemelay rolled gh and game-songs incessantly rang within its lodges the accompaniment of loud drum beats. "Let none the children stray out of sight," bade Panarhsont to s tribe, "no children for sure, until our minds are ıpeased." Terrified, the villagers at first abided by their ıef's command. But children are easily led on; in their le curiosity they forsake all caution. So they pushed rth, step by step, little by little at a time, now down the .nk, then, the morning after, in a dug-out to the op-ısite shore. And no harm befell them in the least. ther boys crossed the river, feathers in their hair, played ong the river's edge, even ventured near the ghostly vellings, and they gaped at the painted signs on the ıuse fronts that fascinated them as the light draws e moths at dusk. Returning home unscathed, they read the news: How wonderful the lodges! How rge and how startlingly adorned with the luminaries the sky—the Sun, round like a disk and glittering,

the Star with four corners, bright at night and dark in the daytime, the Thunder-bird with its feathers bristling and its beak held in leash, and the Rainbow glowing with colours the rarest—like red-earth, black-powder, blue from decayed willow trees, and the yellow-orange *amluh* from the inner fibre of alder bark!

A female slave, a *kha*, was at last despatched by Panarhsont to the Sun-house, a bearer of the wonted request between friendly neighbours, "My master's fire has gone out. *Tilkuh*—fire, if you will!" As she picked live coals in the open hearth, she glanced sideways first at the gamblers intently stooping around a mat, then at the woman near her, and forsooth, she recognized Pearl-labret's daughter, Skawah herself, roasting the chines of animals for her household.

"Here is ghosts' food for your master's pleasure," said Skawah, presenting the slave with a piece of meat toasted brown. That is all she said, "Ghosts' food. . . " The slave muttered in reply, "Ghosts' food. . . ," and hastened away, awe-struck, dropping the coals as she tripped at the threshold.

Panarhsont would not taste the meat which the *kha* laid before him, for ghosts' food is known to be deadly to the living. But was it really ghosts' food? he pondered, since the newcomers outwardly differed little from ordinary mortals. A boy bit off some of the meat, out of mischief, and, while his parents expected him to fall dead where he stood, he only smiled at them saying, "Why! it passed into my body as human food will. All of you taste it, all of you swallow it! It is delicious meat—the toasted flesh of the goat from the mountain ranges."

Relieved of her anxiety, the slave rejoined, "When you destroyed Keemelay, winters ago, did you slaughter

its inhabitants, or did you not? Did you kill the ıiden Skawah, and the ancient one, her mother?" A ıtroversy arose between the warriors, from side to side. ost agreed that both mother and daughter might well ve escaped to safety in the woods far away.

The fiendish gamblers of Kunradal were overjoyed the rumour that their new neighbours passionately lulged in the game of *rsan*. They clamoured, "Let gamble with them. When we sit around the mat u may see for yourself whether Skawah has saved her : somehow."—"Not so! we urge you for the sake of that matters, not so!" advised the elders. "These angers, be they spirits or ghosts or mere people, seem :ndly to us. But no one should be deceived! Their ly thought is for revenge. Naught else!"

In response to the invitation conveyed by the slave, 'ell your men that we want to toss the sticks with :m!" two picked gamblers took their fate in their hands, : next day, and paddled their canoe to the far shore. they entered the Sun house, Skawah spread grizzly- ır skins for them to sit on and served them the dish welcome. The brothers made room for them on the t side of the mat. And the two parties vied with each ıer all day without respite. The Keemelay brothers in : end lost all they had staked to their rivals, who now t wholly at ease for their facile success.

More gambling the next morning, and many chattels stakes on the twin piles. The skins of bears covered : floors in honour of the guests, and dry fat of the ɔuntain goat, the *yehyet*, passed around in lavish abund- :e as though its supply were limitless. This proved : greatest contest ever known, replete with thrills at ry turn. The Kunradal elders themselves succumbed the lure and ere long joined the party, to win their

share of the booty. For Skawah's sons, be it granted, lost much property in their first encounters, intentionally playing with markers not their own, but their contenders'.

The time for deeds was drawing nigh. The Sky-born brothers produced their own *rsan* set of walrus ivory and abalone pearl insets, a mystic treasure from the hands of their grandfather above. They drew their crests on their faces in paint, red, yellow and black. And fortunes changed sides from that moment. The earth-children swiftly lost all their stakes. Their garments and prized amulets were thrown in as a last resort, in a frantic effort to retrieve their luck. They conferred under their breath and returned to the charge for a finish. Their purpose was to play fair no longer, but to pick a quarrel at the least pretence. Few as they seemed—perhaps only seven—the foreigners were at their mercy. And the Kunradal braves should no longer be imposed on by shams and a display of outlandish tricks. Now was their turn at hand.

The challengers entered for a last encounter the lodge of Ligi-yuwen, the lodge named "Garment like the hat of Darkness" because dull brown faces representing shadows at night decorated its inner walls. They squatted down and began to make fun of Ksemamhaym, the cripple of Keemelay, whose limping around the fire so aptly gratified their spiteful intent.

A minor chief of Kunradal laid as wager his best arm of war, a powerful mace of mountain maple with a sharp spike. The mace called for an equivalent, no less. Ligi-yuwen must in justice to himself yield his most valuable weapon of defence, the *harallarh*. He staked it. There was no choice. But his war-club looked like a toy, a mere trifle, on the mat beside its match. The visitors, even their leader burst into laughter. "Have you not seen my stake, younger brother?" he enquired with

casm. Shamed, Ligi-yuwen knew not how to reply. What is this plaything intended for?" rejoined the chief, owing cedar-bark shreds at his face in contempt.

The insult instantly aroused the sky-born brothers; d Ligi-yuwen declared, "Whoever the *harallarh* touches destroys." To which the retort, "Why! you are eating, it would not injure a bird." He sprang to his et, club in hand, and shouted, "When I hit, I kill!" is outburst provoked naught but jeers, "And you dare to our face, you fool! Did you only know! The besmen that lived here before you were no wiser. hey defied us. We slaughtered them and burnt their uses. That was done. Now is your turn!" Before could lift his mace, Ligi-yuwen cast his *harallarh*, lling him at a blow. The uproar awakened the echoes Stekyawden and the foremost Kunradal gamblers fell ad in the affray.

Their followers hastily retreated to their village for inforcements. As they withdrew across the river, cawah's sons broke into song, the song which they had hearsed in their father's heavenly abode for the day of taliation on earth, Pearl-labret's dirge recounting her ials and the downfall of her tribe.

"O people of Keemelay, how crushing your defeat, ow utter my despair! Where are you all, that no one ould respond to my call? Yet, you know me, you hear e sound of my voice, from the hills where the last of ou may have fled; nay, from the clouds above, where our ghosts now wander aimless, unavenged. Listen o me, live or dead, listen to your sister, your mother, our blood! Here am I, in distress untold! Algyah, lgyah, algyah!"

Fear and anxiety again beseiged the souls of the Kunadal councillors at the ominous news blurted out by the

fugitives. To their entreaties for succour against the accursed strangers, Panarhsont yielded reluctantly, forecasting disaster. "They are not people, have I told you, but *narhnauks*, spirits resorting here for our destruction. Let us flee and save our lives, before it is too late!" But the warriors refused to abide by an old man's advice, bound as they were to battle to the bitter end, happen what may. "Those *narhnauks* are like Weegyat, Big Fellow of old—only tricksters, few in numbers—, not many, as they would have us believe; and we hold them in our clutch. We can muster the numbers to overpower them. Rue they will their rashness and the day of their first clash with us, the mightiest athletes in the land."

As they paddled across the river they heard once more the lament from the painted houses on the bank, "How bitter my complaint, how utter my despair, O Sun, Moon, Spirits, that travel on high, night and day! Must you see Keemelay lie in its ashes, and let its hunting-grounds be ransacked? Must there be no law in the land, no posterity to my daughter Skawah, no posterity for a morrow and a new awakening? Must there be only an end, O Powers above, only an end, algyah, algyah, algyah!" To this cry of distress they answered with the challenge, "If not true men, then let it be—they are shadows, or ghosts of the murderers of Keemelay. How could the ghosts of the air prevail against the warriors of Kunradal, whose weapons are deadly, whose hearts are unconquered?" And they rushed headlong into the fray.



The struggle that began at the hour of *yuhsa*, before sunset, lasted throughout the night; then from morn to sunset, never abating a moment. War-whoops rent the

s did the wailing of the fallen. Ever new aggressors
ed in their canoes from Kunradal, and after a time
the neighbouring villages enlisted to its support.
he defenders of Keemelay staggered at the impact,
d their forebears once before. They mustered their
rces behind shelter for a supreme effort, at daybreak,
ı the beams of the sun brushed them with their soft
r feet and imparted new vigour to their tired limbs.
he hundredth time Daran-wilget shot arrows with his
am hakukak; Sling-shot struck at human heads with
laylem-kry; Andeesem battered his way through the
ders' ranks with his stone fist; and Ligi-yuwen bran-
ed his *harallarh* in his left hand for blows frequent
deadly. Many bodies littered the ground about their
ıge, while their mother, Skawah, longed for the victory
ıingly within their grasp, yet retarded by the surge of
recruits aligned against them, a victory at times in
ardy for lack of numbers.

An arrow embedded in his body, Andeesem fell pros-
e, the first of the avengers to receive mortal injury.
fell Sling-shot a while after. Their sisters rushed to
r rescue, Willauran chanting over their bodies, "Arrows
straw, such are our enemies'—*Hawalem kyortehl*
vaulay . . . ", while Ksemanhaym extracted the ser-
ed points to the song, "I draw it out, the poisoned
t," thus healing the wounds by witchery. All four
ırned to the battle-line. Their brother Daran-wilget
s overpowered and carried away as if to slavery by a
d warrior who held him fast on to his shoulder. Kse-
mhaym pursued the raider like a mountain goat and
ped off his head from behind with her hunting knife.

While the brothers sat down and rested at *weesah*,
d-day, the turns of fate confused their minds sorely.
e besiegers were openly converging for an attack on

all sides, a mass attack that would crush Keemelay as might a rock-slide from the mountain top. "You are like the fingers of the hand—just a few," shouted in their direction a stentor, from the far side of the river; "Here is our last summons; deliver the bodies of our young men to our hands—You may still comply willingly!" To this threat Daran-wilget retorted, "Are you so reckless, are you so blind, that you fail in all this to recognize the hand of avengers seeking retaliation at your doorstep, the souls of Keemelay reborn to Skawah for a posterity that now throws back the challenge to your face two-fold?"

Incensed beyond words, the besiegers broke forward for a decisive attack. Skawah, trembling, picked up a wooden wedge, drew on it a human face open-mouthed, and cast it into the fire, to ward off final disaster. The smoke from the flaming wedge would pierce the blue vault, pry open the sky, then enter the Sun's house aloft, with the prayer, "Thy sons are hard pressed, hark ye!" For the Sun father once had recommended, "When you feel weary and faint, drop the wedge into the fire and I will know your hearts' yearning."

The wedge no sooner was burnt than Gyamk, the Sun, tarrying in his course near the gate of sunset, looked down between the planks on the floor of his lodge, and cast a flood of light on to the earth below. So bright and scorching were his rays through the painted front of Gus-tatkeeya, that the onrushing horde of Kunradal raiders, taken by surprise, tumbled into the boiling waters of the Ksan. Thus the almighty Rays of the Sun enabled their children to overcome the powers of evil and curb their felonies.

Panarhsont summoned the last survivors of Kunradal to his side, and heaving a sigh of despair, declared, "Let us take to flight ere it is too late. Long have I warned

ong have I forecasted the coming of avenging spirits,
› no avail, to no avail. Now we are all but lost,
e brink of the abyss. Have I not last night heard
›ice of the Krah, the Raven whose plumage is dark, our
:tor, bidding us depart at once for a new home?
:-kyaw, O you fearless one, the last of my nephews,
t my advice, take the lead, let us flee up the river,
:he wilderness wherein lies our only harbour of safety!"
Neest-kyaw bent his head in compliance. The truth,
naked truth, had daunted him at last. There was
o lose in a contest between man and spirit, between
earth and the sky. He had to submit, as had his
:smen, helpless as they were; submit they must,
›ping their heads for fear, wailing all the while and
ırning their dead. They gathered their possessions in
e at night, their last night in the bosom of their
:stors' homeland, the beloved country of Temlaham
longer their own. "These strange men cannot be
royed, O the sorrow of our hearts!" they lamented;
eir turn now it is to rule over these domains." Yielding
the inevitable, all but the most obstinate sub-chiefs
ıed under the banner of Krah, the Raven, and the
lership of Neest-kyaw, to march out of Kunradal
ore dawn on their way to an exile remote and ever-
ing.

Of the gamblers' village on the Skeena not a house must allowed to stand, no house nor even a trace of it ever so nt. The last vestige of revolt and iniquity must be wiped t from the path of the Sun over the Ksan, where again pre-iled the supremacy of custom and equity among the tribes man. That is why Skawah, once the bride of Sunbeams the sky, came out of her painted lodge in Keemelay ith the magical Earthquake casket, and slowly lifted it leways above her head, chanting the incantation, "The

accursed town is turning over even as the *tsa-urh* charm in my hand." The earth began to rock, from the opposite river-side to the slopes of Stekyawden beyond, then it tilted sharply, until it reeled on its edge and turned over with a terrific crash. The whole mountainside meanwhile slid down, covering the empty town of Kunradal with blocks of broken rock and coming to a standstill a short space behind, where we still see a low ridge that runs down the river. This happened at dawn, and the last of the ghosts so long unavenged departed on the clouds for the homeland of souls. The craving of Keemelay for blood-revenge was now satisfied, and the restoration of its ancient lineage to its former seat achieved through the mysterious powers that dwell in the luminaries of the sky.

Duties other than retaliation were left for Sunbeams' progeny to fulfil among the unenlightened tribes of mankind. Theirs was in high degree the wisdom of Skyland about the rules that guard the peoples' welfare in the meanders of existence; theirs, the new knowledge of heraldic crests, which mark the strands of relationship and inheritance, and the taboos of blood precluding marriage; theirs, an insight into the mysteries of the life beyond death, rebirth and the spirits that inhabit the spheres unseen; theirs, no less, the mastery over all useful crafts, that provide shelter and food for the lean seasons of the year. They had entered on their career boldly, bludgeon in hand as it were. Proceed now they must on their noble tasks, not unlike those of culture-heroes at the beginning of the world.

The tale of their adventures is long and entrancing, too long to relate here in full. It is scattered in sundry

des, like the broken limbs of a fallen tree, in the
;rees of those who at the present day claim descent
one of Skawah's six children, who still display
,arments, house-fronts and totem poles their sacred
ems of the Sun, the Rainbow, the Star and the Thunder-
of the clouds. These households in time multiplied,
migrated to various parts, but never abdicated the
ıory of their high-born ancestry, which is their mystic
ıerty, the most jealously guarded of all.

After Sunbeams' human descendants had laboured and
pered for generations, establishing crests and clans
ıng their neighbours at large, they began themselves
forsake their sublime mission among their fellow-
ıgs. Their blissful existence in Temlaham, an earthly
ıdise, was the fruit of their obedience to the laws of
Sky, of their loyalty to their ancestors. Yet, they
ıed their heads both ways, as we will learn presently,
lated the taboos, grievously offended the animal
·its in nature, and thereby courted disasters that spelled
ultimate downfall of Temlaham and the dispersion
their kin over the scarred face of the earth.

The PAINTED GOAT *of* STEKYAWDEN



THE NATIVE "PARADISE LOST" OF TEMLAHAM USED TO STAND,

On the Upper Skeena (near Hazelton)

By Annie D. Savage

The PAINTED GOAT *of* STEKYAWDEN



FOR ages our ancestors throve in peace. Their hearts were pure as the fresh snow. Happy were their lives and blessed with prosperity. Their home-land once more had become an earthly paradise, the Eden of Temlaham, our pristine birthplace.

Their blissful existence might have lasted to this day, had they obeyed the words of sky command for the welfare of all, the words of the first precept: 'Do not abuse animals nor ridicule them. Their lives are not unlike yours. Their spirit-selves, unless propitiated, stand over them in readiness for the deed of retaliation. Do not waste their flesh nor scatter their bones. Above all, spare their broods, lest they visit their wrath upon you and migrate from your hunting territories, leaving them barren and desolate for your own ruin.' But our ancestors, no less than the sinners in our midst, strayed from the high path and met with their downfall in the end.

Remember ye all, O people of the allied tribes here assembled, remember the sacred rules, remember their dictates to the close of your lives! They still endure above our heads, they still speak to our hearts, as ever they will. Yet—Oh, how heinous the offence!—there are fools who this very day question their wisdom, doubt their authority over all dwellers of the Ksan. Are we

deed, divided in our allegiance? Are we not ob-
of the ancient law? Must we not as a result suffer
ıalty, the dire penalty that befalls every sinner before
run to the end of his tether?
ten and receive a timely lesson! Bear in mind the
ıle of Du'as, Raven-feather, our forefather, who
entured beyond the realm of the living into the world
spirits, who received a unique reward from the
d-goat of the mountains for a kindly deed. Listen
emember! My tale is ancient, therefore, plain as
ght of day. It is truth itself,—the *ada-orh*—the
lore of our sacred emblem, the Mountain-goat of
ıwden.



fter the victory over Kunradal men no longer indulged
ivolous games. Skilful hunters, they resorted to
forest preserves, and returned home with plenteous
. Thus they spent most of their industrious lives.
choice sport was to hunt mountain goats in the
ranges above Temlaham, to hunt them and capture
in snares.
ı time, they grew careless, gave no longer heed to
ıles of the chase. They slaughtered too many goats,
knew not what to do with the meat. Surfeited,
left the flesh bleeding on the ground, exposed to
ın, the bones scattered, unburnt. They carried home
the kidney fat, for food, and the horned heads,
rophies. Impious hunters, I call them, and grossly
ovident!
he children at home, emulating their elders, made
ɔf the heads of the goats, tied them to their foreheads
masks, and danced impishly to songs that aped the

ancient dirges. Their offence met only with indulgence, instead of rebuke and punishment.

Yet, should they not have remembered, young and old—sinners all!—that the wild animals are intelligent like human beings, only more canny; that they are gifted and powerful—like the spirits themselves! The Goats of the lofty crags beheld the bones of their kindred lying scattered in the dust, overheard the jests and the songs, and they were aggrieved in their hearts.

Six cousins there were who caught many goats in their deadfalls, one spring, and with their bows and arrows destroyed the rest of the herd. No greater spoilers than they ever disgraced the Ksan. They maimed the survivors and chased them away with jeers that sounded like curses. The only one spared was a kid, which they held in captivity, that their children might make sport of it as they pleased.

The kid was much abused wherever it set foot. One evening, a crowd led it to the river bank, and thrust it over the edge into the swift running waters. It swam ashore, clambered the slope, only to be thrown back over and over again. What sport! Never before had any one beheld a goat swim a stream like a deer or a bear—a goat whose only known habit is to saunter and graze near the high peaks, and glide off in the twinkle of an eye beyond the crests.

Cast repeatedly into the icy flow, the kid was near death. Its limbs were growing cold and stiff. The children wanted a little more fun and allowed it to limp ashore. They stretched it on the sand. Its body was wet to the skin. It was shaking. They built a bonfire to warm it. One of them cried out, "Its fur is still soaking wet," and kicked it into the fire. The shaggy hair on its body began to sizzle and singe. The kid

g out of the flames. "Behold!" exclaimed another; :oat is dirtier than mud!" and thrust it back into the t. Once more the kid clambered ashore but met with nercy. Its persecutors kept it tumbling back and , now into the fire to burn, then into the river to n.

ın old chief, passing by, nodded his head and gave ing, "Stop your foolery, O thoughtless rabble! ıre the spirits!" They jeered only the more and ked the kid headlong into the fire.

)u'as—Raven-feather—spied them and took pity ıeir victim. Wise and highborn, he could not stand ınd suffer such an indignity. Stepping forth, he manded them, saying, "Stop this! The kid is my pet, he carried it away in his arms to the lodge of his : Nee-awks.

Supernatural one," he murmured along his way, v sinful of them, how cruel!" He rubbed his hands / on its body and anointed its burns. Dipping his ı in ochre dissolved in salmon roe and parting the hair around the kid's neck, he painted bright red :s over the burns and drew red circles around the ils and the eyes in its white face.

ſt night, Raven-feather led his pet outside the village, t to the foot of Stekyawden. "Go, little one!" he l, "Go back to your home! You are free, O little l!" Tottering on its legs, the kid disappeared in hrubs.

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The moon of ripe berries went by. When the moon lling leaves brought the people back home, the mas- of the mountain-goats and the fun made of the kid

were things of the past—utterly forgotten. Messengers from other towns, from Anwagwis, Wiluksa, Gunmatk and elsewhere, would appear from time to time at the edge of the village, conveying as on other years invitations for the winter festivals.

One day, the uncanny voices of spirits—from hidden cedar bugles and whistles—broke out in the thickets above the village. They were the familiar call of foreign delegates on an official errand. Four young strangers slowly marched down the mountain trail, their limbs sheathed in blankets of white fur, their heads crowned with bands of twisted red cedar, in which stood the black feathers of the raven. Messengers they were—hæts—their faces painted white, their nostrils and cheeks girdled with tiny red stripes.

Temlaham greeted the strangers in the ancient style. The outstanding leaders dispatched food and presents, donned their regalia and danced in their honour. The delegates, in response, delivered their invitations at every door, saying, "Greetings to the high chief within! Our message is for him who stands out as the spider-like feet of the Sun. Our uncle, Great-one-of-the-hills, wishes to display his wealth before your eyes and entertain you as never before."

"Be welcome, O strangers!" acknowledged the head chief; "inform your uncle of our acceptance. We will resort in a body to his lodge in the hills." He bade his nephews forthwith tender the envoys trayfuls of smoked salmon soaked in candle-fish oil.

Withdrawing, the delegates stood off at the edge of the shrubs for a while, with their gifts of food hidden under their blankets. Then, as they stooped down, they

creened their eyes with their garments and quietly began o graze as goats will on the hillsides.

An orphan, musing by himself, perceived them, and ay down, too, in the grass, the better to observe them. He watched them for some time. What a strange people! They cut the blades of grass with their broad front teeth, hewed them as goats would, and swallowed them down. Yet, there was no mistake, their faces were human-like; nd so were their limbs. Puzzled, he ran back to his unt, declaring, "These are queer hæts. They do the nost ridiculous things. They bury their long faces in he weeds. They graze like animals in the bush." No one ever listened to his chatter. His aunt paid no heed; ior did the chiefs. To the people at large he was as low s dust, an orphan whose words were as unnoticed as he babble of a brook. Moreover they were all busy ehearsing new songs for the festival. If incredulously hey stared at the strangers, it was only for a moment, rom afar. And they failed to see them grazing. The eremonial meal of the strangers had come to an end. An orphan, they thought, is always a fool, a jester. It vas clear that he had tried to deceive them, and they espised him only the more.

The next day, from moon till dusk, the Temlaham villagers followed the delegates along the hillside trail. A village surged on a high bluff at sunset; a large house, he head-chief's, stood at the forefront, near the edge of a liff. Sparks from the smoke-hole of the feast-lodge lew in all directions. They gazed at it in wonder. Stand still!" ordered the delegates; "wait here a while!" And they proceeded ahead by themselves, to give warning o the cliff-side hosts.

Soon a multitude descended the steep trail, with trayuls of wild rice and dried berries, to welcome the guests.

The chief came forth dancing and singing, and he urged them to follow him into his lodge for the night revelry. Dancers met them in the door-way, wearing blankets of mountain-goat skins white as the snow. On their heads stood carved ornaments like live faces of goats, topped with single white horns.

The guests entered the lodge one by one, singing their own sacred songs as they walked up to their seats. When, in his turn, Du'as—Raven-feather—stepped over the threshold, he met a young man, who stood in his path. "Friend," whispered the man, "full well I remember you! Do you still know me?" And he pointed to the rings around his eyes and his nostrils and the red stripes under his blanket around his neck. "Come and sit beside me," he added with affection, guiding him to the rear corner post, near which he sat close to him.

The mountaineers burst into a song, a song of war. Their chief, attired as a mountain-goat, leaped out of the screen of secrecy. Slowly he began to dance, advancing towards the huge fire in the centre. The chorus of maidens chanted, "*Wahiya hihi iyaha . . . wa—*" The dancer, with mouth opened wide, echoed, "*Wa—, wa—!*"

Thus did our ancestors hear for the first time the song of the mountain-dwellers, the Goats with single horns, which to this day has remained our treasured possession.

The song of Entrance ended, the maidens intoned the song of the Raven.

"The Raven flies here, trying his best to pick my eyes, pick them with his beak, my eyes out of their sockets, trying to find a nest for his brood. The Raven flies here, trying to pick my eyes out."

The mountain-goat dancer meanwhile stepped forth, circling round the fire more spiritedly at every turn, till he broke out :

"When I shake my hoofs behind Stekyawden, the mountain trembles to its very root, *kaigwaw hay*!"

Leaping high, he shook his feet together. The feast lodge rocked to its foundation, and the Temlaham visitors huddled together in fear.

"Be ready!" the Painted-one advised his friend Du'as, Raven-feather, "for our prince is mighty. When he sets his foot down the earth cracks to pieces. Tighten your arm around my waist, for your very life's sake."

As the dancer still circled about, a mountain peak surged out of the ground, and rose above the fire, slowly, slowly. It grew in size till it looked like a real mountain, like Stekyawden itself. Goats stood on every crag in numbers.

"When I shake my hoof," repeated the maidens, "the mountain trembles to its very root, *kaigwaw hay*!"

And lo! as they sang, the feast lodge split in half and the peaks thrust their heads through the open smoke-hole.

A mountain-goat, huge and mighty, leaped down from the highest crags, to the song :

"Behold our prince! When he strikes the flanks of Stekyawden with his hoofs, the rocks split asunder like clay baked in the sun. Behold our prince! the almighty one, whose eyes glitter like opalescent pearls!"

In despair, the Temlaham guests whispered to each other, "These people are the Mountain-goats themselves..."

With one blow of his hoofs, the prince knocked off the front of the house, and it fell down with a report like thunder; with two more, knocked off the walls on

both sides, and they crashed in a rockslide. Young men rushed about, crying in the darkness :

"Light the fires, light them for our guests!" for the hosts never fail to kindle the fires when their chief has finished dancing. "Light huge fires everywhere!"

The Painted-one reassured Raven-feather, saying, "Let us sit here, sit side by side, you and I." And they both changed for the night into small spruce trees hanging from the crevices in the cliffs.

When Raven-feather woke up at dawn, he found himself on a narrow ledge, far up in the mountains. Next to him stood his pet, the Kid, whose face still bore the red stripes as on the day he had given it its freedom. There was no trace anywhere of his people or of the feast lodge.

The Kid spoke to him, saying, "It is all over. You may leave our country now, and go to your village." But Du'as could not find a path. A steep wall rose behind, the abyss gaped below. He began to weep, as he remembered the ill-treatment of the Kid at the hands of his kinsmen.

"Why do you cry, O my friend?" enquired the Kid. Raven-feather answered, "There is no escape, no trail anywhere. The bodies of my people are strewn on the rocks below. If I move a foot, I must perish like them."

The Kid asked : "Did you recognize our people, your hosts?"—"No, I did not;" replied Raven-feather; "who are you all if not a strange tribe, not unlike the spirits of nature?" The Kid explained, "The Mountain-goats of the mountains, that is what we are. Our home is Stekyawden, as you know full well. Our *ya-auk* was no ordinary festival, like those of your people. Blood-revenge was its aim, naught else, the revenge of the Goats upon the Temlaham wasters of our herds. Your hunters

neglected to observe the age-long rule; they did not burn the bones of our dead as they had been taught, but left them on the grass, to decay in the sun or be gnawed by wolves; they failed to carry the spoils of the chase home, failed for many seasons to appease the manes of their victims. That is why our messengers went forth, on an errand of retaliation."

Raven-feather understood. He leaned his head forward and shed tears of shame and regret.

"Do not cry!" resumed the Kid; "the crime was not yours, but that of your tribesmen. You once saved my life. I will save yours. Kind and friendly were you to me. When your friends cast me into the fire to burn, you rescued me, petted me, painted stripes of ochre around my neck, painted circles around my eyes and my nostrils I owe you much gratitude! Do you recognize the stripes and the circles? They are from your paint-brush. I shall forever treasure them. So will my heirs to the end of time. Now you may go back to Temlaham—empty, desolate Temlaham. Do not be frightened as you descend from the heights."

Raven-feather still trembled with fear. He could discern no path. "Put on my blanket," bade the Kid, "and your limbs will be as nimble as those of my people." No sooner did the blanket sheathe the body of Du'as than he changed into a mountain-goat. After his escort, he proceeded safely down the narrow ledges and the smooth slopes.

When they came to a sheer drop, Du'as could no longer follow the Kid. "Wear my shoes," hastily exclaimed his supernatural helper, untying his hoofed moccasins and tendering them to him. The two travelled down a very narrow trail, no wider than a human hand. "Whatever I do, you must do. Whenever I speak, you

must speak!" commanded the Kid, before resuming the descent.

Soon they had to stop again. No longer was there any sign of a trail. "*Kwisamaws*—Little thumb, jut out of the rock!" the Kid chanted. Raven-feather echoed, "Little thumb, jut out of the rock." And a knob jutted out of the stone wall, upon which the travellers leaped in turn. On their way down the mountain-side, "Thumb, jut out!" they repeated many times, and thumbs of rock kept on appearing and vanishing under their hoofs till sunset.

The Kid halted at the foot of the cliffs. Here was the end of his journey. He said, "Now you are in your own country, O my friend. The time has come for us to part. When you speak again, you must say, "On the sand," and your next step will land you on the trail of the spruce hills."

He took off his horned cap, invested it on Raven-feather's head, chanting, "*Wa—! Wa—!* Yours shall henceforth be the *Ralk-mateeh*, the head-dress of my people."

The *Ralk-mateeh*, the head-dress of the Mountain-goats, has been ours ever since. So it happened. Du'as our ancestor, handed it down to his posterity, the purest of the Fireweeds of the Ksan, whose scattered households strayed away from their cradle after the Downfall.

As soon as Du'as, Raven-feather, felt the soft sand of the people's trail under his feet, he shook off his white pelt, untied his cloven moccasins—the mountain-goat skin and hoofs—, and hung them to the limbs of a spruce tree. And he paced the home trail alone, crying bitterly, for he beheld death and desolation everywhere. The bodies of his kinsmen and friends littered the ground at the foot of a rockslide.

His lament rang out like a dirge amid the empty houses of Temlaham. Indeed, a dirge it was, the dirge

f the Mountain-goats, which was to pass down from is lips, the dirge still in our keeping:

"The little spruce tree hangs aloft, hangs aloft. On he ledge it hangs till morn, then marches down the liffs chanting *Kwisamaws, kwisamaws* . . .

"The puny Goat is my pet, the Kid of the crags, the lear, snow-white one, whom I once saved from the wift waters, from the bonfires of man; who for my eward rescued me from peril, bestowed on me gifts aplenty.

"Behold the prince, proud and mighty! He sets his oot down and the earth cracks to pieces, crumbles to dust. Behold the prince! He knocks off the flanks of Stekyawden with his hoofs, and the stone walls split asunder like clay baked in the sun. Behold our prince, the highest among he mighty, whose eyes glitter like opalescent pearls, the pearls of Larhmawn, the far, deep sea."

The DOWNFALL

"*The Sun is your father and the Sky his abode. Life is his seed and growth his daily concern. Beware lest you spoil his work and mar the beauty of his creation! Never laugh tauntingly in his face, for you owe respect to him. Else, you court your own doom; else, you conjure the downfall of your tribe and its final dispersion in the wastes of wilderness.*" (*The last of the Four Rules of the Sky that stand like the corner posts of the world.*—The Retaliation of Keemelay.)

The DOWNFALL



HEN Du'as entered Temlaham, he found it silent and desolate. The cedar bark roofs of the lodges that once sheltered Skawah's grandsons had fallen in. The broad slabs of the walls lay scattered in the weeds, leaving the corner posts and ridge beams exposed like huge skeletons to the glare of the sky. Ruins tottered everywhere. Nettles grew in the once hard-beaten lanes. Only a few survivors, women and adolescents, skulked at the edges of the village, their hair cut short and their faces blackened for grief and mourning.

How could a blight so overwhelming have swept through his homeland in the short space of four days, for was it not only four days that he had been away? Yet, what seemed four days to him was in truth four years, the four years of his adventure in the spirit-land of Stek-yawden.

Du'as broke into tears, vented his sorrow to the winds of the earth, and sought comfort in the dirge of his ancestors :

"O people of Keemelay, how crushing your defeat! Where are you all, that no one should respond to my call? How bitter my lament, how utter my despair, O Sun, Moon, Spirits that travel on high night and day!"

Temlaham in time rose out of its ruins. The younger generation, grown of age, came into its own and sought

nates among the foreign tribes scattered throughout the ountry. So it happened that Skawah's sky-born progeny ecame mixed with the tainted races of man.

The new race increased in numbers and throve in he perennial home of summer and plenty. Years and ears went by, generations upon generations. Temlaham nce more became a blissful paradise in the vale of the Ksan.

Game swarmed in the forests and in the hills, fish n the river. Berries and nutritious roots of all kinds bounded on the high bluffs and in the dark valleys—he huckleberry, the crab-apple, the soapberry, the saskatoon, he wild rice and the fern root of the hillsides. The weather ontinued fair and bright thoughout the year; the winters were mild and balmy. The Sun smiled perpetually upon is creation.

Blessed with untold prosperity, the new town grew far beyond its former boundaries. Its three parts, stretching far along the river bank, assumed the names of Anwaris—"Place-of-digging", Temlahamet—"On the good-prairie", and Gwenrald—"Sand-hill-crane". So numerous were its inhabitants that their combined might could not be resisted by man, animal, or spirit. When a flock of geese flew over Temlaham, the people would pour out of their lodges, shout at the top of their voices, beat their wooden drums; and so loud, so devastating was the clamour, that the birds, instantly subdued, fell to the ground in heaps, an easy prey to countless hands.

No event in the year surpassed in importance the setting of the salmon traps in the Ksan and the capture of the first spring salmon. The three villages laboured together, in the Moon-of-new-leaves, and erected a dam across the shallow stream. While the men planted the poles in the river bed, or conveyed slats, reeds, and roots from the hills by the armful, the women sat down to

their menial tasks of splitting the roots, rubbing them on smooth stones to make them pliable, and weaving the fish baskets which were to be set along the dam in the path of the fish swimming upstream. And the people were forever happy, in the days of common toil no less than in the seasons of rest and festivals.

Countless though the salmon were and meant by nature as the richest food, it none the less devolved upon our ancestors to observe the rules of the Sky, long familiar to all, which must forever regulate their capture and consumption.

When the first spring salmon—the ya'a—entered the traps, the community at once was apprised of its arrival. The head-chief proceeded in regalia down to the dam, chanting prayers to appease the salmon spirits and make amends for the ruthlessness of man. The Salmon-prince, thus heading the yearly run, met with deep reverence as it passed to the hands of its human captors. Soft green boughs, ferns from the ravines, and golden lilies from the ponds, covered its opalescence and kept away the spider feet of the Sun.

Spoken to with loving, brotherly words, the ya'a allowed its body to be split open with a large shell from the sea and cleansed in the sparkling water of the springs. The chief sliced its flesh in narrow strips, long and thin, and stretched them on hazel splints that gave them consistence and flavour. Then he boiled them in a cedar box wherein red hot stones heated the water into bubbles and steam.

All the villagers, to the last man, received their share at their doorstep, from the hands of young noblemen, and prayed, "Let us return thanks to the Spirit for his favour

n this day and other days to come!" and sat down to silent communion.

The river spirit fell to the ancient plea. Every year or untold generations, the salmon continued to rise from he ocean, ascend the river, jump the rapids and stumble n droves into the fish traps of our forefathers. Happy lays in a true wonderland!

The people in time again grew surfeited, careless. This was their fault from the beginning. Since the fish :ept returning in like numbers every spring, what need vas there for prayers and atonement.

So fat and indolent had they become that they over-ooked the precept. Boughs, fern leaves and water ilies no longer screened the pearly bodies of the salmon. The chief passed lightly over the duty of propitiation. Awe and reverence departed from the first sacred meal of he season of *sint*. And the resentment of the water spirits grew greater from year to year, till the whole river threatened an upheaval and the sky bristled with nidden thunders.

The very spine of the Salmon-prince himself fell, one spring, to the lot of Gyaren, a half-witted pariah, nstead of being piously restored to the Ksan, as ever had been the custom from the time of the Flood. Peeved at the jest, Gyaren stepped out of the lodge, held the spine over his head, calling, "Sun of the blue vault, what will you do when you behold this? Here is the Salmon-prince's own self bare to the bone. Still, what do the chiefs care? They have plenty to eat in trays deep and brimful."

Snow began to fall around the mountain tops. Noticing the white flurry, Gyaren went on with his abuse: 'Snow, Winter-snow, O Mahdem, why are you fooling about us at this season of the year? It is springtime.

Don't you know it? Salmon is here. Don't you see it? The winter is past. The summer moons must run their course onwards, not backwards, as you would have us believe!" Once more he waved the bare spine of Salmon-prince to the angered face of the Sun.

Red squirrels ran on the salmon dam, across the river, at dusk. The people saw them, and shuddered at the evil portent. "This is an evil omen" they whispered, hastily withdrawing to the rear of their dwellings in fear and wonder.

Snow fell in sheets the whole night. High winds swept down the valley at dawn. Their cold breath chilled the village dwellers and brought them worry and discomfort. Ice formed on the river and crushed the salmon weirs. It was winter, winter as we now know it, only four-fold, winter suddenly come upon the land of summer and blossoms. The seasons had travelled backwards at night, till the earth had wholly turned over for the crimes of man.

The food ran short in the homes of the living. There was no hope of replenishing the larder.

A deluge of snow covered the whole land. The houses vanished under the white drift. Snowbound, the inmates froze for lack of firewood, starved over empty food trays. They boiled their dried pelts of animals as a last resort, the leather of their garments and the sinews of their snowshoes. Meagre sustenance! Soon they starved to death, many of them, in each household.

The survivors, weakened, tried to burrow passages from house to house, under the snow banks, but they failed in their tasks.

"Chief-of-the-Sky, we are lost!" cried Tawee-welp, in despair. "The seasons have turned round and lost their bearings in the storm." His wife, our ancestress,

ill had some smoked salmon. She doled it out sparingly
› her household, till there was left only half a salmon.
'urning her basket upside down, she moaned, "Sun,
ur Provider, behold the bottom of my basket!" Then she
ng, as a conjuror would, rattle in hand and tossing her
ead from side to side :

"Half a salmon in the tray, let us spare it, let us sing
ver it,

"That it may swell manyfold, that it may swell
eyond recognition!

"That we may not all yawn our last breath, leaving
o one to bury our remains.

"Half a salmon in the tray, let us spare it, let us
onjure Returning-spring with it!"

Nola likewise still survived in his house alongside,
is underground house, the *da'ak* that sheltered his
nisery. Blue-jay—Kwiskwas—landed at the edge of
he smoke-hole, one day, with a twig in his beak, a twig
›f red elderberries, chirping, "*Sa sa sa, weehlawts, weeh-
awts* . . . " Nola saw him, Nola, whose eyes could
till see; Nola heard him; Nola whose ears could still
ıear. Nola was wise. His was the wisdom of a seer,
ı man of power over spirits. He cried out: "Our life
hall be saved. Summer dwells elsewhere. Our home-
and harbours a curse, our homeland alone. Let us
ake to flight, let us burrow our way out, let us follow
Blue-jay to the fields of springtime!"

Thus it happened that our ancestor Tawee-welp and
is neighbour Nola dug tunnels under the snow, Nola
proceeding with his family up the river to the Small-
canyon, the present abode of his descendants; Tawee-
welp following the course of the river towards sunset.
The former land of bliss and plenty had ceased to be.

It has remained a barren prairie, forever desolate, forever accursed.

Other families also met with like salvation. Some of them fled to the Nass—Kyarh, "Run-away", and Tauq, "the Warrior"; others, to the sea coast—Tsyebasa, whose emblem is the Moon; Saihs, who claims the Rainbow; and their kinsman Nees-nawa, the proud owner of the lodge that stands under the shadow of the Grizzly-bear.

Our forefather Tawee-welp met all the moons of the year on his way down the river, from winter-time to late summer. When he emerged from the tunnels he tramped on the melting snows of the spring. Our grandmother sang exultantly, "*Habiyaha*! the bottom of my basket is getting bare as my hand!" Then they passed *lasiyans*, the moon-of-leaves, the swollen streams of the moon-of-berries, and came to *lase-weehawn*, the moon of bounteous salmon. Here they halted, here they remained down to our own time, on the Segyukla river, our beloved home, where we were born, where once we thrived in large numbers, where we stoop down to our graves amid wild roses at the end of our lives.

❦ ❦ ❦

What is Temlaham to-day, what is it to us, who live on reserves conceded by the Ramkseewah, the White Man?

A legend of the past, a barren stretch, two miles below Hazelton on the Skeena, a place which we still visit at times, when we are sad at heart.

Our people once lived there, lived happily for an age. So we are told, so we believe.

But we survive in a world greatly changed, greatly defaced, in a country that no longer remains its true self, that no longer abounds with game and fish, between mountain slopes repeatedly bleached by forest-fires, in

valley that has passed to other hands, where tears often ·ip from our eyes as the only relief in our sorrow. The /hite usurper has staked most of our preserves for his wn use and barred off our approach.

Some of us protested bitterly when the very site of 'emlaham was taken away from us by three white men, ver a score of years ago. The land, then, was opened p for settlement. We tried to resist the spoliation; only ɔ be sentenced to a term in gaol for our punishment. 'emlaham, even though only a forlorn symbol, was no ɔnger ours. We were forced to relinquish it. The nly thing left for us to cherish now is its memory, the ıemory of its unearthly beauty, its memory in words ure and simple. And we still commemorate, we still ing aloud, Pearl-labret's dirge at the burial of our headhiefs :

"O People of Keemelay, how crushing your defeat, ıow utter my despair! Where are you all, that no one hould respond to my call? Yet, you know me, you hear he sound of my voice, from the hills where the last of ·ou may have fled; nay, from the clouds above, where ·our ghosts now wander aimless. Listen to me, alive ɔr dead, listen to your sister, your mother, your blood! Here am I in distress untold. Algyah, algyah, algyah!

"How bitter my lament, how utter my despair, O ɔun, Moon, Spirits that travel on high night and day! Must you see Keemelay lie in its ashes, and let its hunting-grounds be ransacked? Must there be no law in the and, no posterity to Skawah, no posterity for a morrow ınd a new awakening? Must there be only an end, O Powers above? Algyah, algyah, algyah!

APPENDIX

SOURCES *of* INFORMATION

Kamalmuk

The so-called "Skeena River Rebellion" is still an interesting topic among the pioneers of the upper Skeena. It first came to our attention in 1920. The accounts of the event in the mouths of the white people were brief and incomplete, though colourful. As the theme involved the native law of retaliation, the author secured as many relations from native informants as he could obtain, from 1920 to 1924. Some of these are lengthy and explicit. Several of the narrators, both Indian and white, knew the circumstances at first hand. Some of them, indeed, were involved as actual characters in at least a few of its dramatic episodes—for instance, Mr. Loring, who was of the Roycroft police party and later became Indian Agent for the district; Jim Larahnits (Hlengwah), of Kitwanga; Mark Weegyet, head-chief of Gitsegyukla; Charles Mark (Kamayæm), of Gitsegyukla; Peter John (Guhwâtu), of Hazelton; Salomon Harris (Lælt), of Kitwanga, and others. We also became acquainted with Fanny Johnson herself (Sunbeams), in 1924, at Andimaul.

The author has also drawn much of his materials and knowledge from his voluminous ethnographic notes, collected for the National Museum of Canada, in the

course of several seasons of scientific research among the Gitksan tribes, particularly the Gitsegyukla, the Kitwanga and the Kitwinkul, from 1920 to 1924. His collection of Gitksan songs (over one hundred and fifty numbers recorded in native text and translations, and on the phonograph) have also been a constant source of authentic inspiration.

LIST *of* VERSIONS

From the Gitksan Indians:

1. From Jim Larahnitz (Hlengwah, Earthquake, the Larhsæl head-chief of the Kitwanga tribe; a friend of Kamalmuk and his contemporary, whom he first visited upon his return from his exile at Medzee-aden Lake.

2. Mark Weegyet, the Gitsegyukla head-chief, one of the important characters in the narrative; who died in old age, in 1925.

3. Isaac Tæns (Tseegwee), a "brother" of Weegyet, of Gitsegyukla, who resided most of his life in Hazelton, and died in 1922.

4. Charles Mark (Kamayæm), of Gitsegyukla, of the family of Gurhsan; a Christian Indian, who died—from witchcraft, according to his own belief—in 1925. We obtained two accounts from him in 1923 and 1924.

5. Lælt (Salomon Harris), a Larhsæl chief, of Kitwanga, now blind, who was engaged by Roycroft to deliver a letter to Kamalmuk.

6. Semedeek, the old Eagle head-chief of Kitwanga.

7. Peter John (Guhwâtu), of Hazelton, who, with Charles Mark, escorted Kamalmuk on his way to his exile at Medzee-aden. He died in 1925.

8. Lurhawn (George Derrick), an old chief of Kitwinkul, blind.

9. Kamanut (Simon), now of Hazelton, a noted outlaw of former years.

10. Fragmentary data from several other sources.

From the White people :

11. Mr. R. E. Loring, formerly Indian Agent at Hazelton, now living in retirement at Victoria. We have several times discussed the 'Kitwinkul Jim affair' with him, and also possess a printed summary which he published in a Vancouver paper.

12. Mrs. Constance Cox, whose mother accompanied Mr. Vowell as an interpreter on his mission to Kitwinkul.

13. Mr. R. S. Sargent, who arrived in Hazelton in 1891, and often heard his early contemporaries refer to the "Skeena River Rebellion".

The Retaliation of Keemelay

From oral accounts recorded by: the author, among the Tsimsyan proper and the Gitksan, on the Skeena and adjacent North West Coast, from 1914 to 1925;—Dr. Franz Boas, among the Niska, of the Nass River, and the Tsimsyan of Port Simpson (about 25 years ago);—Mr. Diamond Jenness, among the Carriers of Hagwelgate, near Hazelton, in 1923.

LIST *of* VERSIONS

The author's :

1. Dictated by Isaac Tæns (or Danes), of Hazelton, in 1920; his Indian name was Tseegwee; he belonged to

ıe Fireweed phratry and the household of Weegyet, ıe head-chief of Gitsegyukla. This version was given ; that of Hrantu, now John Brown, of Kispayaks village. is one of the most complete and circumstantial. William eynon, of Port Simpson, acted as interpreter.

2. Dictated by Herbert Wallace, Nees-yaranæt, ead-chief of the Gitsees tribe, among the Tsimsyan, t Port Simpson, in 1915. Beynon, interpreter.

3. Dictated by Benjamin Tate, of Port Simpson, in 915. This version was given as part of the myth of ırigin of the Gitksedzaw clan of the Gispewudwada hratry of the Tsimsyan. Beynon, interpreter.

4. Dictated in English by Mrs. Dudoward, of 'ort Simpson, in 1914.

5. Dictated to interpreter Beynon, in 1916, by oshua Tsyebasa, a leading Gispewudwada chief of the Gitrahla tribe of the Tsimsyan. It was given as the nyth of origin of the family of head-chief Hale.

6. Dictated by Huksiyæn of Gitrahla, to inter- ɔreter Beynon, in 1916.

7. La'oi's version; a part of the traditions of a amily of the Raven phratry; dictated to Beynon, at Gitrahla, in 1916.

8. Dictated by Enoch Maxwell, chief of the Gitlæn ribe, of Port Simpson, in 1915. Given as the myth of Neest-kyaw'oi, of the Gispewudwada phratry. Inter- ɔreted by William Beynon.

9. Dictated in English by Mrs. Constance Cox, ɔf Hazelton, in 1920, who had learnt it when young from Norsemgyet, an old Kitwanga woman.

10. First part of the myth, dictated by Kamayæm (Charles Mark), of Gitsegyukla, in 1923. Mrs. Cox, interpreter.

Dr. Boas' versions :

11-12. Dr. Boas published two versions of this myth: one, recorded about 30 years ago by himself, among the Niska of the Nass River (*Transactions, American Ethnological Society, III*); and the second, recorded for him by Tate, an educated Port Simpson native ("Tsimshian Mythology," in *The Bureau of American Ethnology*). We have not extensively consulted these versions in our transcription.

Diamond Jenness' versions :

13. Skawah myth recorded in English from Donald Grey, a Carrier Indian of Hagwelgate, by Mr. Diamond Jenness, of the National Museum of Canada, in 1923.

14. A short account, recorded in English, in the same year, from Felix George, of the same tribe.

Other versions have also been published by J. R. Swanton, in his "Haida Texts and Myths" (*Bureau of American Ethnology, Bull. 29*); and by Arctander, in his book *The Apostle of Alaska*, p. 108.



The Painted Goat of Stekyawden

From ten versions of the myth of the Mountain Goats recorded among the Gitksan, of the upper Skeena, and the Tsimsyan proper, of the lower Skeena and the coast.

LIST *of* VERSIONS

The author's :

1. Dictated by Isaac Tæns (Danes) to William Beynon, the author's field assistant, in 1920.

2. Dictated by Joshua Tsiyebasa, of the Gitrahla ɔe, on Porcher Island, to William Beynon, in 1916.

3. Dictated by Kamayæm (Charles Mark), of the tsegyukla tribe of the Gitksan, to the author, in 1923. ts. C. Cox acted as interpreter.

4. Dictated by Enoch Maxwell, of the Gitlæn tribe of the imsyan, to the author, in 1915; Beynon acting as interpreter.

5. Dictated by Paul Dzeeus, of the Kisgagas tribe the Gitksan, in 1923; Mrs. Cox acting as interpreter.

6. Dictated by Mark Weegyet, head-chief of the tsegyukla tribe of the Gitksan, to the author, in 1924. ynon, interpreter.

7. Dictated by Peter John (Guhwâtu, of the Kiten-maks be (Hazelton), to William Beynon for the author, in 1920.

8. Dictated by Jas. Wright, of Port Simpson, to as-ıtant Beynon, in 1915.

9. Dictated to the author by Mrs. Abel Johnson, ɔrt Simpson, in 1915. Beynon, interpreter.

Dr. Boas' version :

"The Feast of the Mountain Goat," p. 132, *Tsimshian Mythology* (Bur. Am. Ethn., 30th Ann. Rep.).

A few other versions, available elsewhere and in the ıthor's manuscript notes, were not utilized in the pre-ıration of the literary transcriptions above.



The Downfall

Lists of versions recorded by the author :

1. Dictated by Charles Mark, of Gitsegyukla, in 923. Interpreter, Mrs. Constance Cox.

2. Dictated by Mark Weegyet, head-chief of Gitsegyukla, in 1924. William Beynon, interpreter.

3. Dictated by Hakst, of Kispayaks in 1920. Mrs. Cox, interpreter.

4. Dictated by old Robison (Wawsem-larhæ), of Kispayaks and Hazelton, in 1920. Interpreter, Mrs. Cox.

5. Dictated by Stephen Morgan (Tsyebasa), of Gitsegyukla, in 1923. Alfred Sinclair, of Kitwanga, acting as interpreter.

6. Dictated by Richard Morrison, of Kispayaks, in 1920. Mrs. Cox, interpreter.

7. Dictated by Isaac Tæns (Tseegwee), of Hazelton, in 1920, and recorded by William Beynon.

8. Dictated by William Nass (Brown), at Hazelton, in 1926. Interpreter, Mrs. Cox.

9. And from recollections and comments, in the course of actual visits to the site of Temlaham, with native informants, in particular Isaac Tæns and Abel Oaks, of Hazelton, in 1920.

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